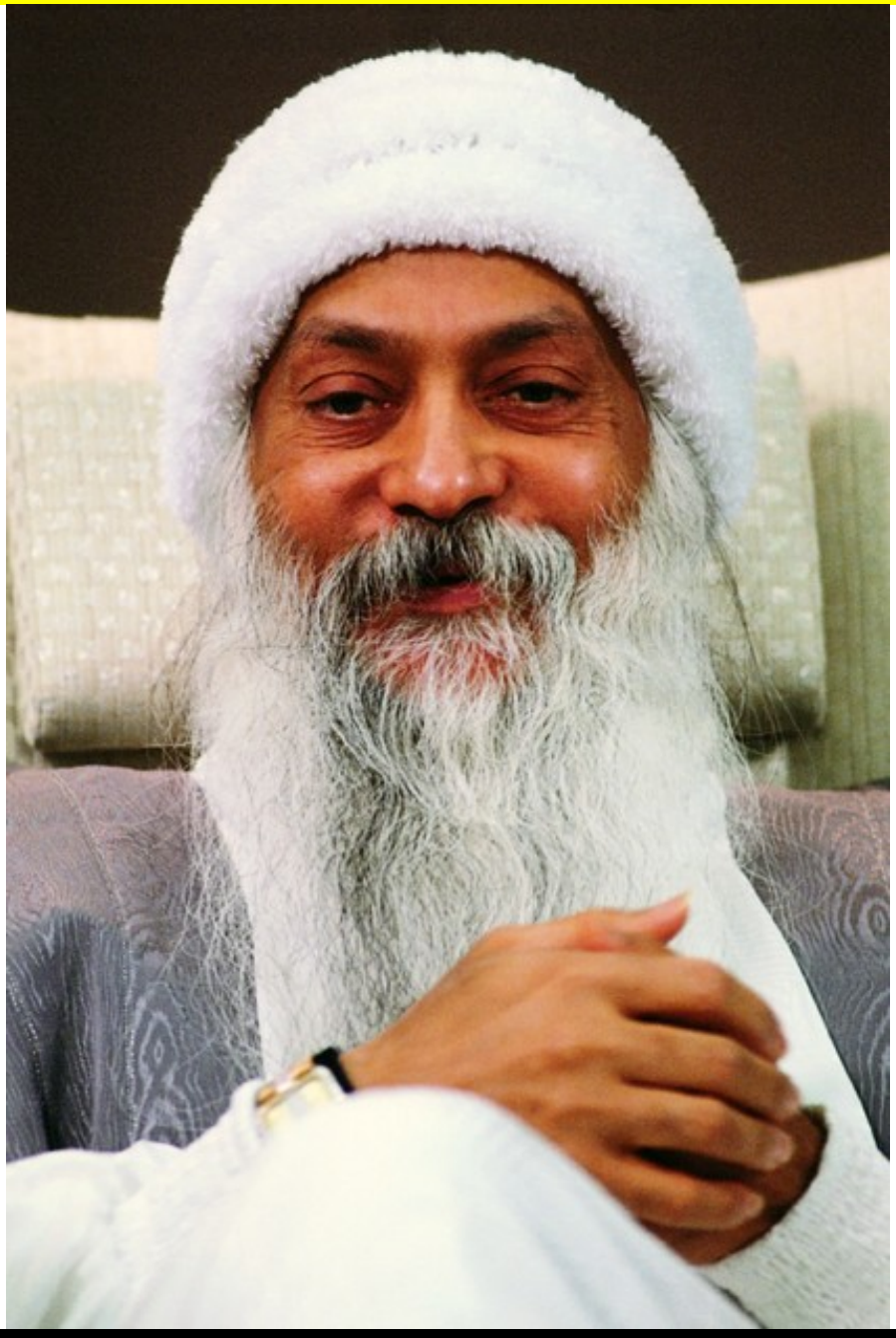
Revolution in Education



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Revolution in Education

Chapter #1

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I would like to tell you a few things which I see about teachers and the society. Perhaps there will be no agreement between the way you think and the way I think. Perhaps I may be opposing the positions taken in the current code of education. I am neither an educationist nor a social reformer. It is my good fortune that I can talk about some fundamental aspects of education and society.

The possibility of any truth about education dawning on educationists should be taken as almost nil. They have been thinking for the last five thousand years, but the present condition of education, its structure, and the type of man that is produced, is so totally wrong that it is natural that only unhealthy and confused leaders are born out of it all. The thinking that is done by the sociologists is also sick and unhealthy; otherwise human beings, their life and their thinking, would have been quite different. Since I am neither an educationist nor a sociologist, it is possible that I can tell you things which can be seen only by looking at the problems directly.

For those for whom the scriptures are important, the solutions become more important than the problems. Since I do not know the code of education I can talk directly about the problems.

The very first thing I would like to say is that the present relationship between the teacher and the society has proved dangerous. What is that relationship? The relationship is that the teacher is a slave and the society is the master or owner. What work does the society ask from the teacher? Society wants the teacher to inculcate the old jealousies, old enmities and old thoughts coming down from the past thousands of years into the minds of young children. Those old people, who are as good as dead or dying, want to bequeath, pass on, such things through the teacher into the minds of new generations. It is very surprising that the society demands this type of work from the teacher and the teacher continues to do such work.

This is a great disgrace for the teachers. The disgrace is that the diseases from which the past century suffered are passed on to the current century, through the teacher, as needed by the society. This is needed because the old structure, the vested interests connected with that structure, and the blind beliefs established in that structure, do not want to die. They want to continue to live within the society.

Because of the job done by the teacher, he is respected. Without flattering the teacher and without respecting the teacher, it is not possible to ask for this work from him. That is why it is said that the teacher is a guru, respectable, and his advice must be listened to. Why? -- because the society wants to bequeath its whole pattern of beliefs to its children through the teacher.

The Hindu father wants to make his son a Hindu, and a Mohammedan father wants to make his son a Mohammedan before he dies. The Hindu father also wants to bequeath to his children the dispute with the Mohammedans. Who will do this? The teacher will do it. The old generation wants to impose its blind beliefs on the new generation. Its scriptures, its priests and everything else is to be imposed. It gets this work done through the teacher, but what is the result?

The result is that material wealth is increasing in the world, but mental faculties do not develop. As long as there is that great burden of old thoughts on the minds of the children, their mental faculties cannot develop. In a small child there is the burden of a culture five thousand years old. The very life of that child is crushed under that burden. Because of this, the flame of consciousness cannot be lit and the individuality of the child cannot develop.

The material wealth increases because whatever is left by the parents is increased or improved upon by their children. But their mental faculties cannot develop because the children are conditioned in that respect. The child adds, without any hesitation, one more floor onto the building bequeathed to him. He is pleased to do it. And the father is also pleased that his son has added one more floor. But if anyone improves upon the ideas already narrated in the Gita, then those who have inherited Mahavira's, Buddha's, Krishna's and Rama's ideas, will be in great difficulty -- for them it is necessary to live within the precincts of the mental structure bequeathed. No new structure can be built. Efforts have continuously been made for thousands of years so that the son does not surpass his father in regard to mental development. There are many devices and contrivances for that.

So, material wealth increases in this world, but mental poverty also increases along with it. There are many dangers when the mind is small and the material wealth is greater. Just as we progress in material wealth and leave our forefathers behind, similarly we should leave them behind in mental and spiritual development also. In doing so, it is no insult to our parents, it is respectful. The right type of father is one who lovingly desires that his children leave him behind in every respect. But it is dangerous if the father does not want his child to go ahead of him in any field. So far, the teacher has helped the father in not allowing the child to go ahead.

It is madness to feel that if we begin to think further than Krishna or Mahavira or Mohammed, it will be an insult to the latter. Because of this, the whole education has remained past-oriented, instead of being future-oriented.

Any developmental, creative activity is always future-oriented.

Our whole education is past-oriented. All our doctrines, ideas and ideals are taken from the past. The past is that which is dead and gone. We are trying to impose things which are thousands of years old on the minds of our children. Not only do we impose the ideas, but we call a child ideal who proves himself a good follower of the old beliefs. Who is praising such a child? This is being done by the teacher, and that is how the leaders of society, religions and the state are exploiting the teacher.

The teacher is made to believe that he is the disseminator of knowledge. He is not the disseminator of knowledge; he is the preserver and maintainer of the status quo, of the knowledge that has developed in the past, and he is an obstacle to the knowledge that can develop. He does not allow anything to leave the parameter of the past. As a result, we continue to do many types of foolish things. Those old things are not allowed to die. The politician has also understood this, and he is also exploiting the teacher. What is surprising is that the teacher is not aware of this exploitation done in the name of service to the society. How many kinds of exploitation are being done!

Once I went to address a congregation of teachers. It was Teachers' Day. I asked them: If a teacher becomes a president of a country, what is the honor bestowed on the teacher? In a teacher becoming a president, what teacher is honored? According to me, if a president of a country becomes a teacher, then I would definitely understand that the teacher is honored.

If a president of a country feels that his job is useless and he feels that it is a joy to be a teacher, if he wants to be a teacher and becomes one, we will definitely understand that the teacher is being honored. But if a teacher becomes a president of a country, the honor goes to the politician, not to the teacher. If a teacher feels honored when he becomes a president of a country, is there anything wrong in a teacher wanting to be a headmaster or school inspector or an education minister? There is honor where there is position. There is position where there is the state. Our whole structure of thinking is such that the state is above everything; so the politician is above everything and everything else is below.

The politician, knowingly or unknowingly, makes his thoughts and ideas enter into the minds of children through the teacher. The priest is also doing the same thing. In the name of religious education this is going on, and every religion goes on trying to make their beliefs and tenets, right or wrong, enter into the minds of children. This is being done at such an unripe age, when the children cannot think. There is no greater crime perpetrated on humanity.

What crime can be greater than making the child believe that what is in the Koran is the truth, or what is in the Gita is the truth; or if there is God it is Mahavira, Krishna or Mohammed? To put all such things into the mind of a child who is innocent, ignorant and unacquainted with the world, is a worse crime than anything else.

Recently there was the question of the independence of India, so the politicians said that the teachers and the students must both participate in the independence movement. When these politicians came into power, they said the students and teachers must keep away from politics. The communists and socialists say, "No, it is not necessary for the students to keep away from politics. Both the teachers and students must participate in politics." If the communists come into power tomorrow, they will say that now there is no necessity for them to take part in politics. Whatsoever is in the interest of the politicians in power becomes right, and an attempt is made to make the teachers and students believe it to be right.

According to me, one can become a teacher in the right sense only if he has within him a powerful, burning flame of rebellion.

A teacher who has no such flame of rebellion within him will become an agent of some policy, some interest -- be it of society, be it of religion, or be it of politics. Every teacher must have that burning fire of rebellion, of thinking and of reflecting. But have we got that fire of independent thinking? If not, are we anything more than shopkeepers?

To be a teacher is a great thing. What is the meaning of being a teacher? Do we ever think about it?

You may be teaching the children, as is taught all over the world, that they should love others. But have you ever thought that the whole structure of your education is built not on love but on competition? You claim to teach love, but the whole arrangement is to teach competition. Where there is competition there can be no love. Competition is a form of envy, a sort of burning sensation, jealousy. What are you teaching?

When one child comes first in a class, the other child is told that he is lagging behind and this fellow has come first. You are teaching him to flatter, to compete and get ahead. You are teaching ego, telling them that one who has come first is higher, and one who is behind is lower. In books you tell them to be humble and loving, whereas your whole arrangement teaches them to hate, to envy and come first. One who comes first is being awarded gold medals and merit certificates; he is being garlanded and photographed, and others, who are behind, are insulted by the system.

When you are insulting the one who is behind are you not goading his ego to push him to the forefront? When the one who has come first is being honored, are you not boosting his ego? So when the children are thus trained in ego, jealousy and competition, how can they love? Love is that which allows the loved ones to go ahead. Love always means to remain always last.

I will tell you a small anecdote to make this clearer. There were three Sufi saints who were to be hanged until dead. So-called religious people are always against real saints. While they were waiting to be hanged, they were sitting in a row. The hangman would call out the names, one after the other, and would hang them.

The hangman cried out the name, "Nuri," that he should come forward.

But the person whose name was Nuri did not get up; instead another person got up and said, "You hang me first."

The hangman said, "Your name is not Nuri. Why are you in a hurry to die?"

The one who had come forward replied, "I have loved Nuri and I have understood that when it is a question of dying, to come forward, and when it is a question of living, to remain behind. I would like to die before my friend dies. If it is a question of living, my friend should live longer than me."

Love speaks like this. What does competition say? Competition tells you to stay behind while dying and go on ahead when it is a question of living. Can the world be a better place to live in when the poison of competition and ambition is being poured into the minds of children? When a child is keen to go ahead of others and others are wanting to leave him behind, then, after being educated for twenty years, what will he do in life? He will do what he has been taught.

Every person is pulling the other down. From the peon to the president, everyone is pulling the others down. In this process, if a peon somehow becomes a president, we tell him it is a matter of great pride and dignity for him. Actually there is no greater violence than that of pushing oneself ahead by pulling others back. But we are teaching this violence and calling it education.

In a world based on this violence, if there are continuous wars it is no wonder! If in a world based on this education, when palaces are being built near huts, what is the wonder if people living in a palace are pleased at seeing people living in huts die? So there are poor people and there are others who have so much more and still do not know what to do with it. This is all due to the present education, and the teacher is also responsible for this. For this world which is created by such education the teacher is responsible. He has become an instrument for exploitation. In the name of giving education to the children, the teacher has become an instrument in the hands of the vested interests.

If this is education, then it will be better to stop educating completely. Perhaps that way a man will be better off. An uneducated man living in a forest will be a better man because he has more love and less competition, more heart and less mind.

We call this education! We teach children just the contrary of what we expect them to do; our whole structure teaches contradictory things. What do we teach? We teach sympathy and generosity. But how can a competitive mind be generous and sympathetic? If there is sympathy in the mind of a competitor, how can he compete? The competitive mind will always be hard, violent and non-generous -- he has to be. Our system is such that we don't realize that one who is pushing himself forward by pulling others back is a violent man. He is violent, and we are making him ready for violence. This way the factories of education are increasing. We call them schools and universities -- this is a sheer lie.

These are factories where sick minds are created, and such sick minds are leading the world into a ditch. Violence is increasing and competition is increasing. Everyone's hand is at everyone else's throat.

Those who are sitting before me will ask: On whose throats have we kept our hands? But if you look deeply, you will find that everybody's hand is at the throat of someone else, and that everybody's hand is in the pocket of someone else. How long will this continue? Where will it stop? From where are these hydrogen bombs and atom bombs coming? From competition and rivalry! It makes no difference whether this rivalry is between two individuals or two nations. It makes no difference who is doing it -- whether it is Russia or America -- there is competition and one has to get ahead.

If you are making an atom bomb, we shall make a hydrogen bomb, a super hydrogen bomb, but we cannot remain behind. We are not taught to remain behind. If you kill ten people, we will kill twenty. If you are destroying one country, we will destroy two countries. It means that we are ready to destroy everything, but we cannot remain behind.

Who is creating this situation? It is all due to our education. But we are blind and we are not able to see the problem. We are teaching children not to be greedy and fearful; but what are we actually doing to them? -- we are teaching them greed and fear all the time.

In the old days there was the fear of hell and the reward of heaven. It has been taught for thousands of years. There is the fear that I may go to hell; there is greed that somehow I should reach the heaven. Wherever there is reward and punishment there will be greed and fear. But what do we teach our children? What is the method of our

teaching? The only method is to teach greed and fear. Either we punish them, or tempt them by offering gold medals, a good reputation, a better post, or a high status in society.

In the days when I was a student, there was a saying: If you study well you will be made a baron, a ruler, a president. We create such temptations in the minds of children. Have we ever taught them to live a life of peace and joy? No. We have taught them to live life by rising to higher positions. We have taught them how to earn more money and have better clothes. We have taught them to be more and more greedy, because that is called success. Is there any place for those who are unsuccessful?

In this system of education there is no place for unsuccessful people. We are just creating the fever of success, and so it is only natural that one who wants to succeed in the world does what he can do. Success hides all wrong doings. How a man rises to become a president from the position of a peon is no more in question once he has become a president. No one bothers how he has become a president, by what means, by what treacheries, by what lies and by what tricks. There is no need to ask how he became a president. Neither anybody will ask, nor is there any question of asking. Once a man becomes successful all sins cease to be. Success is the only goal. Then why should I not succeed by telling lies and by becoming dishonest? If I try to tell the truth and I become unsuccessful, then what else shall I do?

Thus we have made success the center of life; and when lying and dishonesty increase, we become very unhappy. As long as success is the only standard of evaluation, there will be lies, dishonesty and thefts. They cannot be removed, because what can be done if one is able to succeed only through dishonesty and stealing? Everything else is subordinated to success when success is the only value. We go on shouting and crying that dishonesty is increasing. It is bound to increase, because that is the fruit of all that we have been teaching for five thousand years.

Success is not of any value. Success is not a matter of great respect or honor. A man must be fulfilled, not successful. It is better if a man becomes unsuccessful in a good cause rather than becoming successful in a bad cause. Respect should be given to good deeds, not to success. But success has become a value and the whole of life is revolving around that center.

An education commission was set up recently. Its chairman said, "We are teaching our children to speak the truth. We are explaining this in many ways, but children continue to tell lies, many times."

I asked the chairman whether he would like his son to be a scavenger of the roads or a peon in a school, "or would you like your son to also become a chairman of a commission or an overseas ambassador, rising slowly step by step to the very top? If he became a scavenger, wouldn't you be disturbed?"

He said, "It would definitely disturb me!"

Then I said, "If that is going to trouble you, do you really want your son to be truthful and honest?"

As long as a peon is not respected, and as long as a president is respected, there can be no honesty in the world, because a peon cannot continue to remain a peon. Life is not so long that he can just sit idly by in an expectation of success, taking shelter in truth alone. If untruth brings success, who is mad enough not to resort to untruth! The whole situation is such that not only you, but even the god made by you and the paradise created by you, respect only the successful people. If a peon dies, he is potentially fit for hell. No president ever goes to hell -- they go directly to heaven!

We will have to destroy the centrality of success. If you really want to do something for your children and if you love your children, remove the centrality of success and create a center around fulfillment. If you have any love for mankind and if you really want to establish a new world, a new culture and a new man, you will have to give up and destroy your old foolishness and think how a rebellion can be created from within. Now everything is wrong, so the wrong man is created.

A teacher must fundamentally be a great rebel in this world; then only can he lead the new generation on. But the teacher is the greatest traditionalist and goes on repeating the old crap. The teachers do not change. Have you heard of a teacher full of rebellion? He is the most orthodox and traditional person, and therefore more dangerous. The society does not receive its well-being from him.

What sort of rebellion do I expect from the teacher? Should he burn houses, derail the trains, or burn the buses? No. Don't let him take me wrongly. I only say that his approach towards his values -- our values -- should have a spirit of rebellion and that he should think clearly as to what exactly is going wrong.

When we tell a child that he is a donkey or foolish or an idiot because somebody is far ahead of him, think if what you are saying is right. Can there be two persons equal in this world? Is it really possible that the one whom you are calling a donkey can become like the other who is standing ahead of him? Has it ever been possible? Everyone is just as he is; there can be no question of any comparison. There should be no comparison and no evaluation with others.

A small stone is small, and a big one is big. There is a small plant and a big plant. A grass leaf is a grass leaf and a roseflower is a roseflower: as far as nature is concerned, it is not displeased with the grass leaf and pleased with the roseflower. It gives life to the grass leaf with as much happiness as it gives life to the roseflower. If you put aside the human mind, between a grass leaf and a roseflower, which is bigger and which is smaller? Nothing is bigger or

smaller! Is the blade of grass lower than a pine tree? If that were so, God would have destroyed the blade of grass and only pine trees would have remained in the world. But the values fixed by man are wrong.

I would like to tell you some deeper things in this connection. First is this; remember that as long as we continue to compare one man with the other we will always remain on the wrong path. That wrong path is that we are creating a desire in man to be like someone else; and the fact is that no one has been or can be like any other man.

Rama died many many years ago, and Christ also died many years ago. Why is there no other Christ born, although thousands of Christians are busy twenty-four hours a day trying to become a Christ? Thousands try to become a Rama; thousands of Jainas and Buddhists try to become a Mahavira or a Buddha, but why has not even one become like them? Does this not open your eyes? I am not talking about the Rama of Ramleela -- please do not think that I am talking about such a Rama, playing the role in a drama. Some people pose as a Mahavira by becoming naked. I am not talking about such a Rama or a Mahavira.

In your whole life have you ever seen one man exactly like any other? In the whole world not even one pebble can be found equal to another. Here everything is unique and unparalleled. As long as we do not respect the uniqueness of every individual, rivalry, competition, murders and violence will remain. Until then, everyone will try to get ahead through dishonesty, and will try to be like someone else. If this happens, what sort of results do we expect?

Will the flowers in a garden become mad? If great teachers go and explain to them that the jasmine flower should be like the champa, or the champa should become a jasmine, which is very beautiful, will that happen? No, because the flowers are not mad like men. A flower is not so foolish as man to get involved in such thoughts. The flower will not listen to such talks of teachers, philosophers, idealists or so-called religious people.

If the flowers listen to such talks, what will happen to the garden where the jasmine tries to become a champa? In that garden flowers will not grow, all the plants will become withered. Why? -- because however much the jasmine tries to become a champa, it cannot. It is not its nature. In its effort to become a champa, the jasmine will not even become a jasmine, which it was destined to be.

This has been the great misfortune of man. The greatest misfortune or curse for man has been that he is desiring to become like someone else. Who is teaching this? Who has set up this conspiracy? It is only our education for thousands of years that is responsible. Now, if these old pictures of Rama and Buddha become glamorless, then the teacher will want you to become like a Gandhi or a Vinoba Bhave -- to become like anyone else, but never to make the mistake of becoming your own self, because you are useless. It was Gandhi who was born for a purpose: is it then that God has made a mistake in creating you? If God was wise enough he would have created just ten or fifteen fixed types of people like Rama or Buddha; or if he was even wiser -- like most religious people are -- then he would have created just a single type for all the people. What would happen then?

Just think of this world, where five billion people are like Rama. What will happen to this world? The whole world will commit suicide within fifteen minutes. Life will be so full of boredom, seeing Rama everywhere, that it will die. If all bushes produce only roseflowers, what will happen? Roseflowers will not be worth looking at -- no need to see them at all.

It is not without significance that every person has his own individuality. It is a matter of great pride that you are different from others. There is nothing higher or lower; everyone simply is. Everyone is in his own space; therefore all types of valuations are wrong. But we have been teaching these wrong things.

What I mean by rebellion is that we should think and reflect deeply on what we are teaching our children. Are we actually poisoning their minds? Poison can also be administered with love -- and teachers and parents are doing just that. This must now be stopped.

There have been religious revolutions in this world. People of one religion have accepted another religion. Sometimes they have changed the religion under somebody's advice, and sometimes by seeing a sword pointed at their chest, but that makes no difference. If a Hindu becomes a Mohammedan, or a Mohammedan becomes a Christian, the man remains the same. Religious revolutions have not made any difference.

There have been political revolutions. One ruler is thrown out and another has occupied his throne. One who was occupying one piece of land has gone, and one who was staying on the neighboring land has occupied it. One whose skin was white was removed, and one with black skin has taken his place. The inner ruler remains the same.

There have been economic revolutions in this world. The capitalists have been removed and the laborers have occupied their place. But just by occupying that place has the laborer become a capitalist? No, capitalism has gone and professional managers have come in. They also have become as dangerous as the capitalist exploiters. Nothing has changed -- classes have continued. In the beginning there were two classes: rich and poor. Now there is a class to which money is distributed and there is a class which distributes the money. Whosoever has enough power remains in power, and those who are powerless are those who are not in power. New classes are formed but classes have remained.

Whatever experiments have been made so far in four or five thousand years for the welfare of humanity have all been failures. Up to now this one experiment has not been made, and that is the **Revolution in Education**.

It is for the teacher to make such an experiment. I feel that he can bring about a great revolution. The political, economic or religious revolutions have not as much value as the educational revolution can have. But who can bring about such a revolution? It can be done by those rebellious people who can think and question what they have been doing so far.

One thing should be clear in their minds, that whatsoever they have been doing so far is wrong because the results are wrong. We have to think: From where has the present man come? From where has the present society been born? All these wars, all this violence that goes on, this suffering, anguish, helplessness and poverty in the world -- where are all these coming from? Certainly there is some fundamental mistake in the education that we are imparting. So think and wake up. But you must be busy with some other calculations.... There are conferences of teachers held, and it is complained that students have no discipline, and they deliberate as to how the students can be disciplined. Be compassionate; let the students be completely undisciplined -- because we know the results of the discipline imposed for five thousand years. Students have been under discipline for thousands of years, and what has happened?

What is the meaning of teaching discipline? It means that whatever the teacher says should be taken as right. It means if the teacher sits on a platform, the student should sit on the ground; and when you meet the teacher, greet him with folded hands in salutation, or it is even better if you touch his feet. Do not even doubt what the teacher says. Go in the direction he asks. If he asks you to sit, sit; if he asks you to stand up, stand up. This is the type of discipline so far. But it is a conspiracy to kill man so that no consciousness, no awareness and no wisdom remains in that man.

What do they do in military training? They make the recruit take exercises for three or four years. All sorts of foolish things are taught: turning right and turning left. Let them go on doing as ordered so that their intelligence is destroyed. What will happen by telling a man to turn right or left? How long can his mind remain unaffected? If he refuses to turn right or left, you punish him. Within a few days his intelligence will be destroyed and his human qualities will also die. If you tell him to turn right, he turns like a machine. If you tell him to kill someone, he kills. He has ceased to be a man, he has become a machine. Is this called discipline? And we wish that there should be this discipline in children also. So we give the children cadet training, teach them to be soldiers, teach them how to hold guns and kill.

I do not think man has even understood during these five thousand years what these things imply. Discipline means that a man becomes dead through it. The more disciplined a man is, the more dead he is.

Then do I tell you to ask your students to rebel and jump up and fight in schools, or that they should not allow others to learn? No, I am not saying this. I am telling you to love the children. Think about and wish for their welfare and well-being. Because of this love and desire for their good, the discipline which is not imposed will begin to emerge, the discipline which is born of the very intelligence of the children. Love a child and see if it brings discipline in him. This discipline is not the one that comes by turning left and right, but from the very mind, heart and soul of the child. Try to awaken his intelligence and thinking.

Do not say that your's is the only truth. Do you know what truth is? But every man says that what he says is the truth. It makes no difference if you are born thirty years earlier. Just because someone is born thirty years after you, do you know the truth more than him? It is possible that he may have less false knowledge than you because he does not know as much, and that you have accumulated all sorts of nonsense and false things in your head. But you feel that you are wiser because you are older by thirty years. You have the power to punish so you want to discipline him.

This world will be far better if nobody tries to discipline the other. Love -- love is your guide. Live a love-full life. Always think good of the child and think what you can do, and how you can do it, for the good of the child. It is impossible that that love and that desire for his well-being will not bring discipline in him and will not bring respect for you.

There will be a difference though. Now the situation is that the more conscious a child, the more undisciplined he is; and the more of an idiot a child is, the more disciplined he will be. What I am trying to tell you is that if discipline comes through the medium of love, then there will be no discipline in idiots, but the more alert and conscious a child is, the greater will be the discipline that will arise in him. Now only dull children who have neither any life nor any inspiration have discipline. Those who have consciousness and the ability to think are undisciplined. If there is love, things will be reversed. The discipline of idiots has no value. The discipline that comes of consciousness has value because a conscious discipline means it is born out of thinking and it can refuse the wrong demands of discipline.

If the youth of India and Pakistan were disciplined through their own consciousness, is it possible that the authorities of Pakistan could ask the Pakistani youth to go and kill the Indian people? Or could any Indian politician ask the Indian youth to go and kill Pakistani people? They will immediately ask the politicians to stop such foolish talk. They will say, "This is an unintelligent idea and we cannot do it." But at present, the idiots have been taught discipline and if they are asked to kill they do, because for them discipline is the truth.

The politicians and priests have preached discipline in this world. Because these authorities have no intelligence, no rebellion and no thinking power, they try to turn the whole world into a military camp. Through many many ways they try to make sure that nobody creates any trouble.

You may or may not know, but many methods have been devised. In Russia, they have made machines which, if there is any rebellion in the mind, any ability to think, they brainwash it away -- because a rebellious person is dangerous. He can speak against the government and he can provoke the people against wrong things. Earlier, different tools of discipline had been in use, but they were not totally effective. Now they have found these new methods of putting right the minds of those about whom they have suspicions. These are dangerous trends, all over the world -- more dangerous than the atom and hydrogen bombs.

But will the teachers cooperate in such things? I would like to leave this question for your discussion: Are you in agreement with this world? Are you in agreement with man as he is today? In agreement with the wars, violence and dishonesty? If not, think and find out what has gone wrong in the education that is given. It is obvious that whatsoever is being given is wrong.

If a teacher is rebellious, and if his view of life is thoughtful and wise, he is beneficial to the society. He can be helpful in creating better and better societies in the future. If he is not, he will only fill the minds of new children with old rubbish. He has been doing this for a long time. There has to be a revolution, a big revolution, whereby the old educational structures are destroyed and new structures with new values are created. In that new structure there is no value in success and in ambition, and being first or last is not a matter of respect or insult. There has to be no comparison of one person with the other. There should be love and an effort to develop children through love. It is possible to develop a new and marvellous world full of absolute fragrance.

I have told you these few things with a view to awakening a few people from their sleep. But there are many whose sleep is so deep that they feel I am disturbing them in their sleep. However, if only a few awaken and open their eyes, perhaps from whatsoever I have told you, they may find a few useful things.

I do not say that whatsoever I have said is right and the truth, because that is what the old teacher claims. I have only conveyed to you my viewpoint. It may be wrong, there may not be an iota of truth in it, and so I do not insist upon your agreeing with me or believing in me. I only ask you to think on these matters. Think, and if you find anything right in what I have said, it will no longer be mine, it will be the result of your thinking. You will not become my followers; you will have found it out of your own wisdom and it will be yours.

Please think about these few things. Presently the world needs so many shocks for it to be awakened, so that some thinking is born. We are almost asleep, as good as dead. And everything just goes on passing by. I hope you get some shocks from several directions, so that you open your eyes and begin to think.

The greatest responsibility of the teachers is to save themselves from politicians, to save themselves from presidents and prime ministers. All the problems in the world are because of them. Do not let a politician take birth in children. But politicians create the ambition to come first. Once you are number one, where else will you go? Number one is to be found in politics. In the newspapers you will find only their photographs and names printed daily.

Let there be no competition among children. Develop love and joy towards life, not competition and rivalry -- because one who fights with others, slowly, slowly is finished; and one who seeks his own bliss, not rivalry in life, becomes a beautiful flower full of fragrance and beauty. May God help you in having this wisdom, in having this rebellious spirit.

I am full of gratitude for your listening to me in silence. I greet the divine residing within you. Please accept my greeting.

Revolution in Education

Chapter #2

Chapter title: Towards the Birth of a New Man
Date unknown

This discourse was given to a congregation of teachers and students published in booklet of same name.

I am very pleased to be present among you. Certainly, on this occasion, I would like to share some of my heartfelt views with you.

It is painful to see the present condition of education. Birth of a free and healthy man is not possible in a condition where, in the name of education, all sorts of slaveries are nourished.

The root causes for the ugliness and crippledness humanity is caught in are hidden in our education. The present education has cut man off from nature certainly, but has not been able to give birth to any refinement, to any culture. Instead it has given birth to unnatural life. Every generation goes on imposing this unnaturalness on the next generation. And when this unnaturalness is considered refinement and culture, no wonder if even this act of imposition takes the color of a virtuous deed. When a sin masks itself as virtue, it becomes very dangerous.

That is why exploitation hides itself behind service, violence puts on the garb of nonviolence and unnaturalness wears the mask of refinement. It is not without reason that irreligion resides in the temples of religion. Irreligion never presents itself direct and naked. So it is always appropriate that mere clothing should not be relied upon. It is necessary to uncover things and see them as they are.

I would like to look at education, exposing it. I hope you will not feel bad about it. I am helpless, it is necessary to do so. To see the real soul of education it is necessary to remove its so-called clothing, because in extremely beautiful clothes, certainly some ugly, unhealthy soul is residing; otherwise the life of human beings would not have been so full of hate, violence, and irreligiousness.

When we find bitter, poisonous fruits on the tree of life, does it not remind us of our having sown the wrong seeds? If the seeds are right, how can wrong fruits be grown? What else does the fact of the tree being full of poisonous fruits indicate? If the man is found wrong, certainly the education is not right.

It is possible that you may not have been thinking on similar lines to me, and my thoughts may not match with yours, but I do not want you to agree with me; all I request is that you listen to me. Only that much is enough. It is enough to listen to the truth, silently. It is only untruth that insists on being believed. Truth brings results just by its being listened to.

Listening rightly to the truth becomes its acceptance.

My views may be different or in opposition to the educational scriptures. I am neither an educationist nor a sociologist. That is, however, fortunate for me, because the more one knows the scriptures, the more difficult it becomes to know life. Scriptures are always an obstacle in knowing the truth. In a mind full of scriptures, contemplation ceases to be. Is not an unburdened, fair, unbiased mind necessary for contemplation? Scriptures and principles create sides. Then it is not possible to have an unbiased and innocent view about life and its problems of life.

For those to whom scriptures are more important, solutions become more important than the problems. Such a man starts viewing the problems in the context of his solutions, instead of looking for solutions in the context of the problems. It creates such an idiotic situation, where problems do not get solved but increase. The whole history of man is its evidence.

Why is man's thinking and doing so different and contradictory? It is the result of solutions based on the scriptures, and principles being imposed on life. Solutions have not come out of problems, they have been imposed on problems. Solutions are on the outside and problems are inside. Solutions are in the intellect, problems pertain to life. This inner conflict has become suicidal.

This insanity that has been going on within the civilization has now reached an explosive state. The whole human race is fear-stricken by this potential explosion. But what can you achieve by being fearful? What is needed is not to be fearful, but to understand and recognize the whole situation with courage.

I will not bring scriptures in between, because I do not want to be blinded by solutions. I would like to draw your attention to the facts which can be seen only by looking directly at the problems. Is it not possible to see life directly? Is it not possible that we see life directly as the first man would have seen it? Can our mind not see life simply, naturally, and freely?

I consider this to be the most basic problem confronting education. It is not good if education makes the mind of a person burdened, complicated and old. A burdened and old mind deprives a person of the knowledge, joy and beauty of life. For experiencing the knowledge, joy and beauty of life, a young mind is required. The body is bound to become old, but not the mind; mind can always remain young. The mind can remain young till the very last moment of death, and only such a mind can know the mysteries of life and death. Only such a mind is a religious mind.

But the present education makes the mind old. It does not awaken the mind but fills it, and so it becomes old. By being filled with all sorts of thoughts, the mind becomes old, burdened and tired. Feeding thoughts means feeding the memory. It does not spark thinking or intelligence. Memory is not intelligence. Memory is mechanical. Intelligence is consciousness.

Thoughts are not to be given to you but to be awakened in you. Where thinking is awakened, the mind is always young. Where the mind is young, life is a constant challenge. There the doors of consciousness are and the fresh morning breeze comes in, the light of the rising sun comes in. When a person becomes imprisoned by the thoughts and words of others, his own ability to fly in the sky of truth is destroyed.

But what does education do? Does it teach how to think or is it satisfied only with feeding dead, borrowed thoughts? What other power makes one more alive than the power of thinking? But also nothing makes one more lifeless and rigid than learning others' thoughts. Accumulation of others' thoughts brings idiocy. By accumulation of

thoughts, thinking and intelligence are not born. Too much emphasis on mechanical memory in the birth of thinking and intelligence, is fatal. Enough opportunities for thinking and use of intelligence should be made available if they are to grow. Doubt instead of belief is to be taught if thinking and intelligence are to grow.

Belief and trust bind you, whereas doubt liberates. But by doubt I do not mean distrust. Distrust is only the negative form of trust or belief. Neither trust nor distrust but doubt is required. Trust and distrust are both the death of doubt. And where there is no liberating intensity of doubt, there is neither any search for the truth nor its attainment.

The intensity of doubt becomes the search. Doubt is thirst, doubt is longing. It is in the fire of doubt that the life force is stirred and thinking is born. The pain of doubt is the birth pain of thinking. One who escapes that pain is deprived of the birth of thinking.

Do we doubt? Do we doubt the fundamental meanings and values of life? If not, then certainly our education has been wrong somewhere. There can be no other base for right education except right doubt. If there is no doubt, how can there be any search? If there is no doubt, how will there be any discontentment? If there is no doubt, how will your being long for knowing and attaining the truth? That is why we have all become shallow puddles of contentment, and our souls have not remained rivers constantly running in search of the ocean.

Who has created this rigidity? It is certainly created by our education and teachers. Through the medium of teachers the mind of man has been chained, subtly, in slaveries. This subtle exploitation is very old. Reasons for the exploitation are many -- religions, priests, the governments, the vested interests of the society, the rich and the politicians.

The politician has never liked that people should have any ability to think, because where there is thinking there are seeds of rebellion. Thinking is basically rebellious, because thinking is never blind, it has its own eyes. Thinking cannot be swayed this way and that; it cannot be made to accept or do everything you wish. It cannot be made a blind follower.

That is why politicians are never in favor of thinking; they are in favor of faith. Faith is blind. If a man is blind he can be exploited. If a man is blind he can be made to harm his own interests. A man's blindness makes him a victim of all sorts of exploitation, so faith is taught and trust is taught. This is what religions have done. This is what politicians have done. Politicians are afraid of people's ability to think. If thinking arises, there will be no castes and no classes. Monetary exploitation is also not possible. It is also not possible to explain away the exploitation as the result of past lives.

Along with thinking will come a revolution at all levels and in all relationships, and then neither the politicians nor the boundaries of nations can survive. No wall keeping apart man from man can survive. So capitalist politicians as well as communist politicians, both are afraid of thinking. It is for protection against this fear that the present education system is devised the way it is. This so-called education is a part of a big conspiracy which has been continuing for hundreds of years. Earlier the priests were dominating it, now the politicians are dominating.

In the absence of thinking a powerful individual cannot be created because the very foundation for creating the individuality is missing. What is the foundation stone of individuality? Is it not the capacity for independent thinking? But this capacity gets destroyed before its birth. The Gita is taught, the Koran is taught, The Bible is taught, Das Kapital and the Communist Manifesto are taught, and thinking in accordance to their structure is taught. What can be more false than this type of thinking? Blind repetitiveness is taught and this they call thinking.

Where there is a given base, a structure, belief or faith, thinking is impossible. For thinking, mind must be free of all structures. If education gives preconceived structures to the mind, it is not proper. Education should provide such alertness and cautiousness that the mind does not get set in preconceived structures. Education should provide such an understanding that the mind does not become a slave to conditionings and also so that independent thinking ability can arise. If proper attention is given, this can definitely be done. Seeds for independent thinking are already there in every person. In the proper climate these seeds can sprout.

Who does not love freedom? Who does not desire his own independent thinking and intelligence? But where the whole educational system is devised for enslaving man rather than securing his freedom the situation is different. In that case it is a real wonder that a few individuals are able to save themselves from being machines in spite of having passed through that educational structure meant for slavery. There is no greater achievement than that of saving one's individuality even after passing through such educational structures.

Universities have attained to peaks in their efficiency in destroying the original geniuses. More emphasis is laid on discipline, only to take away the freedom of man. The lack of intelligence is being made up by discipline. If there is intelligence, discipline is born by itself in the life of a person. It is not necessary to learn discipline, it comes of its own accord.

But where intelligence is not encouraged, one has to depend on the imposed discipline. Such discipline is bound to be false because it is not arising from within one's own self and because its roots are not there in one's own intelligence. The conscience of the individual is always smoldering from within in opposition to imposed discipline. As

a reaction to such a discipline, licentiousness is born. Licentiousness is always a reaction to slavery. It is the unavoidable echo of slavery.

Consciousness full of freedom can never be licentious. If a man is to be saved from the disease of licentiousness, his soul must receive the atmosphere of total freedom. However, we know only two alternatives -- either slavery or licentiousness. We have not yet become ready for freedom.

Discipline imposed by others is also a slavery. This kind of discipline is falling apart everywhere, and this has created anxiety. This sort of discipline is bound to fall apart -- it should fall apart; reasons supporting its existence are wrong. Its death is hidden within it. This discipline is hiding suppressed chaos within it. And whatsoever is suppressed forcefully is bound to explode one day.

Such a discipline, while it exists, takes away the bliss and naturalness of man's consciousness, and when it falls apart it leaves the person as a ruin. Discipline imposed from outside is never in the interest of any man.

Education should be free of the outside imposition of discipline; it should awaken the dormant intelligence of individuals. Such intelligence becomes self-discipline. In such a life there is neither suppression nor heaviness. Such a life is simple and natural like flowers. When life is progressing through the light of one's own intelligence, there is no possibility of chaos and licentiousness. Where there is no suppression, there is no possibility of an explosion of chaos and licentiousness.

I am asking, can't we make man free? There appears to be the fear of licentiousness in giving freedom. This is so because we have always suppressed man in slaveries, and his soul has been always struggling to be free from slaveries. Whenever it has been possible it has broken the shackles. But in the attempt to break them, the soul becomes so full of bitterness, stiffness and opposition that it becomes licentiousness, rather than becoming free. Freedom is creative, licentiousness is destructive. But if we want to avoid licentiousness, there is no other way but to allow freedom.

Education can definitely lay foundations which can make man free. We do not want a disciplined man any more, we want a man who is rooted in freedom and intelligence. In him there is hope and there is a future.

What have the methods of discipline achieved? Discipline has given stupidity and lifelessness to man. A disciplined person is bound to be rigid. The more rigid he is, the more disciplined he will be. You see how disciplined machines are! Intelligence cannot always say yes; it should also know how to say no. In your yes there will be meaning and value only if you know when to say no. But discipline never teaches saying no; it always expects to be told yes. If a disciplined man is asked to shoot, he has to shoot. It is only because of such education that war, violence and all sorts of stupidities have been going on in the world, and they still continue.

Do we not want to break this vicious circle? Will this teaching of discipline stop only after the nuclear war? But after the nuclear war there will be no such necessity because there will neither exist the discipline-giver nor the disciplined. For the future of humanity there is more danger from the disciplined people than anybody else, because they know only how to obey commands. Those obedient people are ready even to use nuclear weapons. This world would have been totally different had intelligence been taught instead of discipline, had thinking been taught instead of obedience.

Education is not meant for teaching discipline, but for developing one's own intelligence. Whatever discipline results from intelligence, that alone can bring goodness and benediction, because such discipline cannot be exploited. It cannot be made an instrument for violence and war in the hands of priests and politicians. On the strength of such a discipline Hindus cannot be made to fight with Mohammedans, nor can the havoc of death be launched in the name of imaginary and false boundaries of nations. In the name of discipline and obedience, what wrongdoings have not been ordered?

As things are now the society is making the teachers do the work of disciplining the new generation. The teacher has been an instrument for many types of exploitations. He is instrumental in spreading many diseases. Perhaps he is not aware of this, because the teacher himself is the victim of similar education.

Every generation passes on, by way of inheritance, its jealousies, enmities, stupidities to the new generation through the teacher. It gives its diseases and insensibilities along with its experiences and knowledge. It is more insistent and cautious about giving its diseases than its experiences and knowledge, because its enmities and its blind beliefs are its ego gratifications. A Hindu father teaches his children to be a Hindu, a Jaina teaches his children to be a Jaina and a Mohammedan father teaches his children to be a Mohammedan. He wants to hand over to his children the poisons of the life-negative sects he was brought up in.

Through many educational mediums this poison is being spread. Because of such poisonous teaching humanity is not able to become one, and our eyes are not drawn towards that religion which is one and can only be one. Similarly, nationalism is taught, and national egos are strengthened. Every nation is prepared, and made to stand in opposition to the other nations. As a result violence grows and the fire of war continuously burns.

Where there is ego, there is war and violence. There are many such other diseases, viruses which are spread by the teachers among innocent children. This is one of the most ugly crimes committed against man. If the teacher is very alert, only then can he prevent himself from participating in this crime.

Those who are powerful in society do not want any change in the social structure, because their power, interest and exploiting capacity depend on it. The teacher inculcates the structure into the young minds of the children. He goes on binding every new generation to the old traditions. He does not teach any rebelliousness to children. And where there is no rebelliousness, there is no growth.

What is the duty of a teacher?

His duty is to teach rebelliousness.

The day education will be rebellious a new, absolutely new humanity will be born.

What is the meaning of rebellion? It means a revolution of values. Certainly the values of life are wrong; otherwise why should there be so much disturbance, meaninglessness and confusion in the life of man? This ugliness, this violence, this jealousy and irreligiousness, are they all without any reason? No, the values of life are wrong and these are its natural outcome. The values of life will have to be changed. Man needs new values. And for that, preparation for a great rebellion is necessary.

The teacher will have to wake up from his sleep. Excepting the teacher there is no other Bhagiratha -- Indian mythological figure -- who can bring down on earth the Ganges of rebellion from heaven. But the teacher is in great illusions. The society may well starve him by not paying him enough, but the society shows great respect for him. The teacher has always been respected and honored. His ego is nourished by being told that a teacher deserves respect and honor. That is how he is kept in delusion. Thus he is being used to cast new generations into old molds. The teacher is exploited by being treated with great respect. The society does not give respect to the teacher for nothing. In exchange for the respect given, society cheaply takes very costly work from the teacher. I ask you, are the teachers aware of this?

The history of man is full of stupidities. Blind beliefs and false knowledge have erected their camps everywhere. But the teacher does not allow new generations to be free of these chains. He has been the servant of the past and thus has proved to be an enemy of the future. Is it fair that the burden of the past should be on our heads? Let the past be the ground under our feet, but it should not become a burden on our heads. For building the future a mind free of the past is a necessity.

Let experiences of the past add to man's knowledge, but not bind him, because he has to go far beyond them. The past is the beginning of his journey, not the end. He has to proceed forward, from where the past generation has left him. Every generation has to defeat the past generation in every aspect -- not only in the material aspect, but in the mental and religious aspects also. Certainly the ego of the past generation is hurt because of this. And because of this ego the past generation does not like to see any development and progress that surpasses it.

Perhaps the ego and jealousy of the individuals infects the whole generation. All the founders of religions have claimed that there will be no other exponents of their religion. Every paigambara or messiah has said that he is the ultimate. Each has proclaimed himself to be omniscient. In this way they have closed all the doors for the development of knowledge in the future. The golden era is always in the past; in the future there is a fall and degeneration.

It is very harmful to tie man to the pegs of the past. But the old generation always wants to impose its scriptures and principles on the new generation. This has been happening for hundreds of years. As a result, the soul of man could not develop as much as it might have. It did not acquire the maturity which it could have acquired. It is buried under the rocks of the past, and the burden is so heavy that it cannot climb higher.

The purpose of education is to unburden the soul of man, because only weightless souls can rise to the peaks of godliness. The burden of dead conditionings does not allow the seed of consciousness to sprout, and the seed gets destroyed slowly, buried as it is in the ground. It is not possible for the seed of one's individuality to sprout without being unburdened from the past. If the grip of the past is loose, only then man can make progress. The past is a ladder which has to be climbed and left behind. Carrying it on your head is not wise.

In this world material wealth is increasing, because every new generation takes it to more distant horizons than the past generation, but spiritual wealth is not increasing because our minds are very shackled to the past. The son does not hesitate to build a new house where his father had made one. But some deep fear prevents us from developing the inheritance that is left behind by Rama, Krishna, Buddha, Mahavira or Christ. This fear is a taught one, this fear is an imposed one.

A commentary on the Gita can be written, but thinking beyond the Gita is not allowed. And it is considered that there can be nothing beyond the Koran. This attitude has made man very crippled and spiritually poor. If the son becomes more prosperous or goes ahead of his father, it is welcome; it is not disrespectful or insulting to the father. In fact this is the respect, and it is a matter of pride for the father.

Every generation should prepare the new generation in such a way that the old generation is left far behind in every way. The desire to keep the new generation tied to the old generation, and to restrict its movement within the boundaries of the old, is a sick desire and is not indicative of a healthy mind. It is necessary to reflect upon the fact that the current educational system has been cooperating in drawing these boundary lines.

I am unable to understand this madness. My love tells me only this, that all those who are born in the world after me should surpass me in every way; that they should build such a new world that we could not have even imagined; that their souls should be brighter and their thinking purer; that their eyes may encounter those truths which we could not, and their feet travel on unknown paths which were not known to us even in our dreams. Love can wish and pray for only this. I would not like to bind my children by my knowledge or by my experiences; I would like to make them free.

Love always frees. Love that binds is not love, but violence.

Education should be future-oriented, not past-oriented. Then only is development possible. Any creative process can only be future-oriented.

Is it not right then that we teach love and respect for the future? There has been too much meaningless worship of the past. Is it not right that now there should be prayers in our heart for the future sunrises? But we are tied to the past. The past means that which is gone and is nowhere except in the memory. But all our principles, our concepts and our ideals are taken from the past. This way the dead are ruling over the living. Respect for the dead is one thing, but to be ruled by the dead is another thing. However, because of the past ruling over us, even healthy respect for it does not become possible. A constant resistance against the domination of the past keeps accumulating within.

Heartful respect for the past is possible only when the past is not governing us. That respect will be very soulful. In that respect there will be a gratitude and grace. That gratitude will not bind us, but will make us feel more unburdened and weightless. Without any effort our heart is full of gratitude towards those who allow us freedom. Gratitude towards those who bind is not natural and is not possible.

Education is termed as the propagation of knowledge. It certainly should be the propagator of knowledge -- but if education is propagating bondages, it cannot be a propagator of knowledge. Knowledge is where the mind is free. Where the mind is in bondage, how can there be knowledge? Knowledge itself is liberation.

Education teaches fear. Education teaches greed. Education teaches jealousy and competition. Education initiates the fever of ambition. How can such education be the propagator of knowledge? How can such education be liberating? It is a propagator of deadly diseases. Friends, this is not the propagation of knowledge, but the propagation of ignorance.

When I look, I find that there is no more dreadful a disease than fear. What else is there in life to be feared more than fear itself? Fear paralyses the very being of a person. Fear destroys the whole capacity for rebellion. Fear makes any change impossible. Fear binds one to the known, and the journey to the unknown is completely stopped, although whatever is worth knowing and achieving in life is all unknown.

God is unknown. Truth is unknown. Beauty is unknown. Love is unknown. But the fearful mind always clings to the known. It does not go beyond the drawn line. It treads upon the beaten track. It never leaves the laid-out tracks. The fearful person becomes mechanical and he is no better than a drudge. Religions teach fear -- fear of hell, fear of sins and fear of punishment. Society teaches fear -- fear of dishonor. Education teaches fear -- fear of failure.

Simultaneously there is greed attached -- greed for heaven, greed for fruits of virtue; greed for respect, position, reputation, success and rewards. All greed is the other side of the coin of fear. In the present system the consciousness of a person becomes full of fear and greed. The fire of jealousy and competition is aroused. The fever of ambition is created. It is no wonder if, in all these circular motions, life is wasted.

Such education is dangerous. Such religions are dangerous. Education is that which teaches fearlessness, stabilizes one in non-greed, gives energy to rebel, gives courage to accept the challenge of the unknown. Education should not teach jealousy and competition, but love; it should not encourage the insane drive of ambition, but natural and self-inspired growth. But this can happen only if we accept the uniqueness of everyone's individuality.

Comparison of one with the other is a fundamental mistake. Comparison creates competition. Neither anyone is ahead nor anyone is behind; nobody is below and nobody is above. Everyone is that which he is, and everyone has to be that. The teaching of ideals does not allow this. Children are told to be like Rama, to be like Buddha, to be like Gandhi. What can be more erroneous than this? Can anybody become like somebody else, or has anybody ever been able to become like somebody else? It is not possible to become Rama. Yes, one can become the Rama of the drama of Ramaleela....

That is why there is so much hypocrisy in the world. Hypocrisy is the shadow of ideals. As long as ideals are imposed, there will be hypocrisy. If hypocrisy is to be uprooted, ideals will have to be dropped. In fact, no man is born to be like anyone else. Everybody has to be just himself. Everyone has to let that seed which is hidden within him grow into a tree.

When education accepts the truth of everybody's unique and unparalleled individuality, that will be the beginning of a great revolution. Then we will not impose any structure on anybody else, but we will help what is dormant in their seed to manifest. Because of ideals a lot of violence has been taking place and we did not allow an opportunity to a person to be what he can be. In an attempt to be someone else, not only does a person not become that other person, he is not able to be what he could have been.

I very humbly would like to request you to let everyone be what he is born to be. A rose is a rose and a jasmine is a jasmine. Neither anyone is higher nor anyone is lower. The rose cannot be a jasmine and the jasmine cannot be a rose. This valuation of big and small, higher and lower, is false and absurd. Destroy these valuations. A poet is not greater than a cobbler, and the politician is also not higher than anyone. A teacher does not become higher by becoming a president.

Life is a cooperation and in it everyone has a place and everyone is necessary and unavoidable. Don't you see the insanity of ambitiousness the whole world has fallen into because of attaching reputation to position and to functions? It is sheer foolishness that a rose be taught to become a jasmine, and a grass leaf be provoked to become a lotus. What is meaningful is that the roseflower blooms to its fullness and the grass leaf blooms to its fullness, that their petals may not remain undeveloped and their fragrance may not remain unreleased.

There is no other bliss in life except that one blooms to one's full potential. That is the right direction for the work of education.

Neither is there any need to teach ideals, nor is there any need to teach people to follow anyone. All efforts should be centered towards one aim: that people can realize the fulfillment of their individuality. Then only will it be possible to be free of ambition and the fever of jealousy. Then only will a society be created which can achieve equality and peace. Only a society which is free from ambition can be classless and without exploitation.

Can there be no such education, which is not based on ambition? Is mathematics and music learned for the purpose of leaving other classmates behind? Is it not possible to learn mathematics for the love of mathematics, and music for the love of music? As I see it, music can be learned and its depth experienced only if there is love for music, not by being a competitor to anyone else.

Would a competitive mind know music? Competition itself is a disharmony. Music is known by those who have sunk deep into music, not by those who have run in competition. There is an opposition between running and diving deep. Running is full of tension, sinking deep is relaxation. Running is feverish; it takes you out of yourself. To dive deep is healthy, because by diving deep within, one settles in the ultimate depths of his own self. Learning is the art of diving deep. What teaches you only how to run, I call that wrong learning.

Once I went to a meeting of teachers. It was a Teachers' Day celebration. There I asked them, "What is there to respect in a teacher's becoming a president? Is the teacher lower and the president higher? If it is so, then there is no dignity of education or the teacher; the dignity is given to the politician and politics. Yes, if a president gives up his position and becomes a teacher it can be a matter of dignity for the teacher."

As long as we keep the politician higher, we are teaching politics to children. The politicians always say that the students and teachers should keep out of politics. But the higher status of politicians arouses expectations in others. No wonder the teachers dream of being minister of education or vice-president or president, and if they are running about to fulfill their dreams it is natural. Then there is nothing wrong if other teachers are busy in trying to secure honors for the whole teaching community.

Education has to rid itself from ambition. Ambition is politics. It is due to ambition that politics has acquired a seat on a high pedestal. Where there is position, there is respect. Where there is power, there is position. Where there is a ruler, there is power. Because of this race violence is born in life. The ambitious mind is a violent mind. Lessons of nonviolence are given, and at the same time, ambition is also taught. What greater stupidity can there be?

Nonviolence is love. Ambition is competition. Love always feels like remaining behind. Competition always wants to be ahead of all. Christ has said, "Blessed are those who are capable of being the last." I would like those whom I love to stand ahead of me, and if I love all, I shall enjoy standing last in the queue. But competition is just the reverse of love. It is jealousy, hatred and violence. It always wants to stand ahead of all, in every way.

This race of keeping ahead begins in educational institutions and ends in the grave. The same race is there in individuals. The same race is there in nations. Wars are the final result of this very race. Why does this race exist? What is it rooted in? Its root is in the ego. The ego is taught and the ego is nourished.

The ego is being taught and encouraged in small children. Their simple, innocent minds are made poisonous by the ego. They are also encouraged to stand first. Gold medals, merit certificates and prizes are being given. This nourished ego pursues them throughout their lives like a ghost and does not allow them to relax till the last moment of their death. Sermons are given about humbleness, but what is taught in real practice is ego.

Will it not be the luckiest day in the history of man when we stop teaching ego to the children? Not ego, but love is to be taught. There is love only when there is no ego. For this the whole system of education will have to be totally changed. Categories like first and last will have to be dropped. Examinations will have to be eradicated. In their place, those values of life will have to be established which emerge from the acceptance of an egoless and loving life as the highest life-philosophy.

When love replaces ambition, truth is established in the place of success automatically. Where success is the only value of life, there cannot be truth. The central importance given to success has really killed truth. No, being successful is not all there is to life. Mere success is not a value in itself. It is more valuable and dignified to be unsuccessful in a good project than to be successful in doing a wrong thing. It is better to be unsuccessful in love than

to be successful in competition. Is it not more valuable to be unsuccessful in religiousness than to be successful in amassing wealth?

I do not see the value of life only in being successful. I see the value of life in truth, in goodness, in beauty. But as long as success is the only measure, the soul of man cannot move towards truth, goodness and beauty. For truth, goodness and beauty to prevail, even failure will have to have its place in life. One should be able to see that in that direction even failure has dignity. It is a victory even to be defeated for truth, because in your courage to accept even defeat for the sake of truth, your soul is strengthened and it is able to touch those high peaks which are shining bright with the light of God.

Victory and defeat are meaningless. The meaning is in the front -- on which front there is victory or defeat. Is it the front of truth or untruth, love or hate, humane or inhumane activities? I say blessed are those who give up victory on the path of untruth and embrace defeat on the path of truth, because that way they are victorious even in their defeat and attain to the deathless even in their death.

But all this is possible only if there is a revolution in the system of education and the values given to victory and defeat, which have for centuries troubled man, are taken away.

The greatest offense that is committed towards the truth, happens when we insist upon imposing traditional thinking on the children. This insistence is very dangerous. Belief or disbelief, in respect to the soul and God, are imposed on children. The Gita, the Koran, Krishna and Mahavira are imposed on children. Because of this, the quest for knowing the truth never arises in them. They are unable to develop and have their own questions. The question of finding their own solutions does not even arise. They go on repeating the readymade solutions their whole life. Their condition is like parrots. Repetition is not reflection, repetition is mechanical. Truth cannot be received from others, it has to be searched for and attained by everyone for himself.

Is it not fair that inquisitiveness in children be encouraged, that they should not be shackled with readymade solutions? They should be helped in developing their own questions; borrowed answers should not be dumped on them. If education can only send them out on the great journey of discovering the truth of life, its work is over.

In my view, the teacher is one who arouses the dormant questioning in children, awakens inquisitiveness and makes children fearless and courageous enough to find solutions for themselves. One can be a teacher in this sense only if he himself is free from prejudices and biases.

That is why becoming a teacher needs endeavor full of devotion. A soul with awareness, rebelliousness and alertness is required for becoming a teacher. A teacher in whom the fire of rebellion is missing will become, knowingly or unknowingly, a broker for some vested interest -- some morality, some religion or some politics. Such a teacher will impose his beliefs and biases, of which he himself is a prisoner, on the children.

If a teacher is free, then only can he be a messenger of freedom to his students. That is why I said that to be a teacher is a great endeavor full of devotion. It is a great rebellion. Within the teacher there should be a burning flame of thinking, contemplation and rebellion. He has to destroy many things so that he can create. He has to obliterate many things to enable himself to do something new. He has to put fire to the heaps of rubbish accumulated over many generations, and he has to cut the useless weeds and grass that have grown and clear the ground of mind so that the flowers of love and beauty can be grown there.

This is a great responsibility. If the teacher is able to fulfill this requirement, only then a new man and new humanity can take birth.

Revolution in Education

Chapter #3

Chapter title: Education: Love-Oriented
Date unknown

This discourse was given before students under the title: Youth and Rebellion.

I am pleased at the prospect of speaking to the youth and the students. The first thing about the youth that comes to my mind is what today I would like to say to you in detail.

For the old the past exists; that is already gone, and their whole world is behind them. Children imagine about and desire for the future; old people think and worry about the past. For the youth, there is neither past nor future; for them there is only the present. If you are young, you can really be so only through your ability to live in the

present. If in your mind there are thoughts about the past, you have begun to grow old. If imagination about the future still goes on in your mind, you are still a child.

Youth is a balancing midpoint, when the mind is in a state where there is no past and no future. When we rightly live in the present, the mind is young, fresh and alive. The truth is that nothing else exists except the present. The past and the future do not exist. Only the present moment exists.

How many are there who live in the present moment? I call one who lives in the present moment youthful. One who has attained to the ability to live in the present moment has a young mind; it is neither old nor childish. But what happens mostly is that people directly move from childhood to old age; very few attain to youth. One does not necessarily pass through youthfulness. However, the interesting thing is that one who really becomes youthful does not become old, because one who knows the secret of being a youth does not need to become old. The body will become old, it will age and pass away, but the mind will remain constantly young and sharp.

So the first thing I would say to you is not to think of yourself as young just because your age is between that of a child and of old people. Just because of your age you do not become a youth. Being a youth is a very deep happening. I shall tell you a few things in that connection.

I am told you are students. That too I don't see, because if there were students in the world, there would be a lot of knowledge; students go on increasing but not knowledge. Ignorance is increasing. Students are increasing, universities are increasing, but the world is becoming worse and worse. If knowledge was increasing, then the world would really be better.

It would be really surprising if someone took me to a garden and said, "I have grown so many plants and flowers. Flowers go on blossoming, but there is also an increasing stink, instead of any fragrance." We would have to ask then, "How are these flowers and plants grown that the stink is increasing?"

Universities are increasing and books are increasing. I am told there are five thousand books published every week in the world. Books and students go on increasing in quantity, education is increasing, but the world is becoming worse. In this world if wars are becoming more violent, hatred is becoming more widespread, jealousy and envy are on the increase, there must be something basically wrong. For this situation the responsibility really rests on those who are connected with education -- the teacher and the students.

During the last five thousand years there have been many revolutions -- economic and political -- but so far there has been no fundamental **Revolution in Education**. It is worth deliberating on now whether there is any possibility of a revolution in man's culture without any **Revolution in Education**. It is not possible, because education creates a structure of your mind from which it becomes almost impossible for you to be free. A student is studying for fifteen to twenty years, during which time the structure of his mind will be fixed. Afterwards it is very difficult to be free from that structure unless a person is adventurous and courageous.

Is there something wrong with that structure which is educating us? Certainly it must be wrong, because the outcome is wrong -- and it is the outcome which decides if something is right or wrong. The children who come out duly educated, also come out as perverted human beings.

I do not mean to tell you that the ancient form of education was better and that we should return to that. All that is nonsense; in life there is nothing like going back. In the past also the educational system was not basically right. If it had been, the present wrong system would not have come out of it. It was wrong in the past, it is wrong now. Wrong only comes out of wrong.

I will tell you what actually has gone wrong.

The center around which our education is moving is wrong. The whole problem has arisen due to the wrong center -- which is ambition. Our whole educational system is revolving around ambition. What is being taught to us? We are taught ambition. We are taught a race to get ahead of everyone. Even in a small child learning in kindergarten we are creating an anxiety about coming first in the class. There is no greater anxiety than this in the world. The only anxiety is how to get ahead of all, leaving everyone else behind.

The small child going to school is full of anxiety. He will be rewarded if he comes first; he will be insulted if he comes second. If he fails he will be humiliated; if he succeeds he will be rewarded and respected by teachers and parents. We are creating competition in him. Competition is a kind of fever. When you are feverish there is a rise of energy. You can run faster, you can use bad language faster, you can do things which ordinarily you would not be able to do. In fever there is a kind of intensity and speed.

The whole educational system is based on this fever of getting ahead of everyone. The ego of the children is aroused; they become eager to come first. They work hard, with all their strength. But for what? Only because there is competition to come first. This fever of competition gets hold of children. Even after they come out of the field of education that fever persists.

They want to build a bigger house, have a bigger shop, reach a higher position. From being a junior clerk, they want to be the head clerk; from being a master, they want to be a headmaster; from being a deputy minister, they want to become a minister. Somebody wants to be the president of the country, or to be something else. A sort of

mad race for being something or the other takes hold of them for their whole life. In this mad race the whole peace, energy and capability in their lives gets destroyed.

What do they achieve in the end? In the end, they reach nowhere. Wherever they reach, they will find someone ahead of them. And as long as there is someone ahead, they will have no peace. There has been nobody in the world so far who has experienced being ahead of everybody; there is always someone in front. The world is big and we are standing in a circle. In a circle who is ahead and who is behind? Everyone is ahead of everyone else. And then the race goes on and on and on. So far in the world nobody has got ahead of everybody. But we are still teaching children to come first; we are teaching madness. They will remain in the race throughout their life and will waste it.

Our whole education is based on jealousy and envy. We go on saying to people, "Do not be envious, violent and jealous," but our whole education is rooted in jealousy. We point to one child and say to the other, "See how intelligent he is, and how dull you are. Be like him!" Thus we are creating envy and jealousy.

What are we creating in the mind of this child? We are pouring the poison of envy into him. We do not love this child. This poison will flow through his veins, through his mind, for his whole life. The child will always want to be ahead of everyone -- and the joke of it all is that nobody ever has been ahead of all, and there is no joy in being ahead. What has joy to do with being ahead of somebody? What relation can peace have to being ahead of somebody? No, this is a fundamentally wrong teaching.

This ambition, and the educational system revolving round that center of ambition, is wrong. If we want to create a new world we will have to change this center and create some new center.

What can the new center be?

I would like to tell you that competition cannot be and should not be the center of education.

The center of education should be love.

What do I mean by love? If we want to learn music -- and we are so many sitting here -- and if in our effort to learn music we try not to allow anybody to get ahead of us in music... can we learn music in such haste and fever? If we fall into that race to remain ahead so that nobody insults or disgraces us, so that nobody proves that we are unsuccessful and we are nobody, can we learn music? Will this be love of music or love of ego? If it is love of ego, then music cannot be learned. Can we learn music while loving the ego?

For learning, humility is required. Our educational system teaches ego, not humility. Teachers are all displeased and complaining that there is no humility in the students. How can the teachers expect humility? When we teach students to be ahead of everyone, we are teaching them ego. How can there be humility in them? It is a fallacy to expect that. When they stand ahead of others, their humility is destroyed and they are full of ego. Those suffering from ego cannot learn music, cannot learn anything.

To learn anything, humility is required. To learn, egolessness is required. But we are not encouraging egolessness. We are, as it were, firing their ego by telling them, "You have to come first and secure a gold medal in university. You have to be a Bharat-Ratna" -- the highest title conferred on an individual by the president of India -- "You have to be the president"; "You have to be this and that!" The fire of envy is created in their mind -- their ego is encouraged. How can they learn music? How can they learn mathematics? How can they learn the essentials of life? For learning anything, a nonambitious, non-competitive mind is required.

Yes, there is another basis for learning music. That is love of music, not competition with the knower of music. Not competition with a fellow student, but love, sincerity and delight in the subject to be learned is required. It is better that we teach love for mathematics, rather than competition with others learning mathematics. It is better that we create love for music, rather than competition with others who are learning music. Music can be learned because of the love for music. Everything can be learned when we love that thing; then only is it possible to learn. But we are not taught what love is. Our education has nothing to do with love.

So what actually happens is that if you have studied literature in the university, after coming from the university you do not continue to learn literature, because it has harassed you and bored you a lot. If you have learned poetry in the university, your love and joy for poetry in life will have already been destroyed. It is destroyed because it was studied during the race of the egos, studied only to pass the examination and studied to come first. No love for poetry was really created. Therefore, in fact, it happens that our education destroys our genius.

Emerson once said something in honoring the first young graduate of his town -- he was asked to say a few words in praise of that graduate. Emerson said, "Well, let me first understand and evaluate that young man. After that I can say something." After a month he attended a gathering to honor that young boy. Emerson told the gathering, "I have liked this young man, I am all praise for him. But why do I say so? I say so because in spite of his having a university education, he has been able to preserve his genius. I praise him for that."

The state of education is like that. They are really marvellous people who have come out of the intricacies of the university without losing their genius. Ordinarily it is destroyed, it gets destroyed.

The whole foundational structure of education is basically wrong. Then education can only be of competition, rivalry, and ambition, which naturally creates a world full of ambitious fights, battles and conflicts. These children will

grow up tomorrow and will fight. They will fight as a crowd, as a society, as a cult, or as a nation, because they have to be ahead of everyone. They will fight for their country.

All countries of the world are fighting. Why are they fighting? -- because the children have been taught nothing else but fighting. They have not been taught love, they have been taught jealousy and envy. Two world wars were fought recently in which about one hundred million people were killed. There must be something wrong with the education. What sort of education is this, which enables the killing of millions of people over five to ten years? What sort of students have come out of the universities? How diseased are their minds? How is it possible that wars continue to be fought in this world every day and the universities also continue to grow?

If the education is true and the universities are real, wars must disappear from the world. There would be no wars -- because how can an educated person fight? Can a cultured, civilized person fight? Can he kill? -- not one or two persons but millions of people? But that is what we are doing. A well educated student will fight and go to wars! He cannot be aware of the strategies that cause war, because in him only the seeds of war have been sown. The seeds to fight with everyone else have been sown in him. In fact he will be interested in war, he will be happy fighting.

You may have observed that when there is war you feel happy. It certainly is a diseased state of mind. When there is war there is brightness on the faces of people; people appear to be enthusiastic and cheerful. When India is fighting with Pakistan, or when India is fighting with China, or when anywhere else such stupidity is being committed, how cheerful people appear to be! Their nights and days are filled with a freshness. They read newspapers from the early morning, listen to the news and go on discussing the events. Just watch their faces. It is as if some event of great happiness has happened! People have been prepared for fighting. They have no other interest but fighting for all the twenty-four hours of the day.

When passing by and seeing two persons fighting, hundreds of people will form a crowd watching the fight, putting aside many necessary, important things needing to be attended to. What madness! Watching two persons fighting is a sign of a perverted mind,.it is not a sign of a cultured mind. To be interested in seeing two persons fight is a sign of an ugly mind. But people throughout the whole world are doing this. It is true for every country. Our mind is prepared for that.

When one person is defeated and the other has won, we garland the one who has won and disregard the one who is defeated. This is a sign of a perverted mind. This is a sign of a violent and a wicked mind. After all, what is so great that makes you garland a winner and disregard the one who is defeated? Don't you see the diseased mind of the person doing this? Should there be love and sympathy for the man who is defeated or not? Or should we become full of respect for the winner?

If the education was right, love and respect towards the defeated would arise. One would feel amazed upon seeing this person who wanted to win, who wanted to defeat someone. What a violent attitude this man must have! There is violence in defeating someone, there is hatred in defeating someone. The very effort to defeat someone is a proof of a perverted mind, proof of a diseased mind. But we always respect the one who wins, we disregard the one who is defeated. Why? -- because we ourselves want to win. We are supporters of those who have won because we also want to win. In our mind also the same interest in winning is working. We are also interested in sitting on the chest of another person, so we garland the one who succeeds and forget the one who has fallen; there is no value in a defeated person. This is fundamentally wrong.

Try to understand why there is ambition within us. What is the reason for our running so madly? The reason is that the more a person is suffering from inferiority, the more ambitious he becomes. The more inferiority you experience, the more you feel that you are nothing, the more you will become ambitious. Why? Through ambition, you want to prove yourself in the eyes of the world and in your own eyes, so that nobody makes the mistake of considering you inferior.

I will tell you a small story to help you understand. You may have heard the name of Tamerlane -- he fought and defeated a small country. The king of that country was Baijal; he was arrested and brought before Tamerlane, duly handcuffed. Defeated, Baijal stood in front of Tamerlane, who was sitting on a throne with his advisers and soldiers standing by.

Tamerlane began to laugh. It was natural that Baijal should get angry; Baijal, though defeated, was a king. He lifted his head proudly and told Tamerlane not to be foolish. "He who laughs at others' defeat has some day to shed tears at his own defeat."

But Tamerlane said, "I am not laughing at your defeat. I am not so foolish as to laugh over such a small victory. I am laughing at the fact that I am a lame man and you are a man with one eye. How strange God is, that he gives kingships to lame and one-eyed men!"

If I were present at that time I would have told Tamerlane that nobody else asks for kingships except for those who are lame and blind. No wise person would like to become a king. No wise person would like to become a politician. No wise person would want to sit on the chest of another person. No wise person would like to bring someone else down to his feet or be his owner. All these things are desired by the diseased and inferior man residing within us.

The mental states of inferiority and weaknesses within us -- the lameness and blindness -- want to be hidden. We are running to hide them and to prove that the whole world is wrong, that we are alright. We have proved our might, and we are trying to prove to others that we are not weak or wanting. This is the race of the inferior mind.

The education based on ambition is, at its root, based on violence. Ambition is not a dignity to the personality; it is an inferiority of the personality. Everybody in the world is afraid of being nobody. Everybody wants to have a name, to be a VIP. Everyone wants to have a position, a good reputation and a house of his own. Who is creating this madness? It is created by our education.

The education is right which can say that you are enough as you are; that you do not have to be anything else, you are enough as you are. Explore all your possibilities and experience the joy of it. Do not be in a race with anyone. It is not necessary; there is no reason for doing so.

If education can make every person aware that one is enough as one is, and can enable him to experience the bliss of it, if education can make facilities available for the full growth of what one has -- facilities for growth, not for ambition; facilities for love, not for competition; facilities for self-awakening and consciousness, not for conflict with others -- then such education will be able to bring about a fundamental revolution in the world. As long as education is not able to do this, it is not in the interest of man; on the contrary it is harmful to man, it poisons the human mind.

Whatsoever we have is enough. What is lacking in anyone? If a person does not become ambitious, the world is not lacking in anything. If a person does not become diseased with the madness of ambition he has everything. But he is not able to see that. How can he see? We only see what others have. One who is ambitious always sees what others have, he is not able to see what he has. It is interesting to note that if tomorrow he is able to get what others have, he will cease to see that too. Again, he will begin to see what others have.

Just think and see if it is true or not. You have two eyes, two hands, two legs; you are breathing; you have a body -- it is a great wealth with which you can create a great many things.

There was a king who was very disturbed and uneasy, and he thought of committing suicide. He got on his horse and rode towards the jungle. There he saw a young shepherd playing on his flute, and nearby his sheep were grazing. There was such magic in the tune of his flute that the king stopped his horse and told that young man, "You are playing your flute with such joy and abandon that you seem to have been given a kingdom!"

That young man replied, "Kindly pray to God that whatever may be my sins he should never give me a kingdom!"

The king said, "You are mad! What is your fear of a kingdom?"

The young man said, "A man is a king while he has no kingdom. No sooner does he acquire a kingdom then he becomes a slave."

So far nobody has seen a king who is really a king, although many who had nothing have been seen by the world who were real kings, whose joy and bliss knew no bounds, and who created such music in themselves that that music can still be heard even after thousands of years. The world has not seen any music and bliss arising from within any king. His clothes are shining, but his soul is deeply rusted. His crown is shining, but there is no light in his head -- there cannot be ever. What he chooses shows that there can be no inner light. If he had that inner light he would not have been madly wanting to decorate his head with gold.

One who has a golden head never cares for wearing a gold crown on his head. Who is mad enough to drag stones around? But those who have no golden head have their head filled with a lot of rubbish, and a gold crown hides that rubbish.

So that young man said, "Pardon me, and please pray to God that he may not make me a king, ever."

The king was puzzled. He said, "I see that you are wearing torn clothes and your work is to graze your sheep. What is the secret of your joy?"

The young man said, "The secret of happiness is not related to what you have, but in how you are using what you have." He further said, "I have eyes -- I see the beauty of nature and become delighted. I have sheep -- I love them and my heart is full of joy. What is lacking for me? I have healthy hands and feet, I am earning my daily bread. Night and day I am near the moon and stars, the jungle and the hills. What is lacking? Yes, I am lacking in one thing: the anxiety of kings. I have a deep sleep at night."

The king said, "What you are saying is right. Go back to the town and tell the people that you met me and tell them that I have agreed with you on what you are saying about happiness, and that I had come to the forest to commit suicide. I pray to God he may never give you a kingdom."

I also pray to God that nobody should ever think of having a kingdom. Whosoever gets the idea of having a kingdom becomes sick and diseased; his life is being destroyed. But still we are all running a race to have kingdoms. It does not matter what you want to become: as long as you are running after becoming something, you are in the race to become a king. It may be just a small kingdom, but that makes no difference.

The fundamental thing is to recognize what you have within and rejoice in it, to tend the potentiality of it with love. If you can do that, your life can be full of joy. Everyone's life can be full of joy; everything depends on how we use what we have -- just as the shepherd said.

I will tell you another story. There were two hermits in Japan. It was the rainy season, the rains had just begun, and one evening when they came back home, they saw that half of their hut was destroyed; the winds had blown away the roof. One of the hermits was very angry with God. He complained, "The heavy, rainy season has set in, clouds have gathered and half of our hut is destroyed. What will happen to us now? How shall we live?" And it is in such moments that doubt arises if God really exists or not. "The big palaces of sinful people are intact, and God is not thinking of blowing away their palaces, but he blows away the huts of us poor people."

But the other hermit was praying with folded hands and eyes closed, telling God, "You are so kind. Who can trust cyclones? Our whole hut could have been blown away -- it is you who have saved the half of it. Such care of us hermits! We are highly obliged and feel such a sense of gratitude towards you."

The next night that hermit wrote a song: "Until now we had not known that joy which people with half a roof have. Last night we were sleeping under half of the roof, and the moon was so beautiful seen from the other, roofless half of the hut. Whenever our eyes opened during the night we saw the stars too and fell peacefully back into sleep. This morning when I got up I was full of a joy, unknown before. Had God given me the hint, even in a dream, I would have removed half of the roof myself much earlier. There was no need for the cyclone to be bothered about it. But I was not aware of it."

Everything depends on how we take things and with what attitude we accept what we have. Our current education creates wrong attitudes from the very beginning. What is created is not an acceptance of things but a race for things. We think of what others are having -- we are never aware of what we have. In such a situation, life begins on a wrong track. Then only death is able to free us from this misery; nothing else helps. This is the result of wrong education.

Right education will teach us how to develop what we have in ourselves -- but comparison, never. As soon as comparison enters the mind, the problems begin. But our present atmosphere supports comparison.

The birthday of a cobbler is never celebrated by anyone, but the birthday of a politician is celebrated. Why? What significance is there in a politician? What are the reasons? What good deeds has the politician done for the world that you are so obsessed? None. It is just because he has a high position, is occupying a high chair, that his birthday is celebrated. We have compared things in a wrong way.

You may have heard about Abraham Lincoln. His father was a cobbler and Abraham became a president of America. Many people must have become very unhappy at a cobbler's son becoming a president. The same would be the feeling if it happened in our country. So, when he stood up for his first speech in the senate, it was beyond the tolerance of one member. It was beyond the tolerance of others too, but those who were a little more cultured remained sitting silently, suppressing their dislike. That one member stood up and addressing the president said, "Don't assume any airs while making a speech -- your father used to stitch shoes."

Ordinarily people feel it is a lowly occupation to stitch shoes, although everyone wears shoes. Wearing them is not bad, it is stitching them that is bad! This world is really in a mess. If stitching shoes is inferior, then wearing them should be more so. What sort of madness is this!

What did Lincoln say in reply? He seems to have been a man of deep thinking. He said, "I know. As far as I can remember, my father used to stitch the best of shoes. You have reminded me of my father at the right moment. I recollect that the family of the gentleman who has reminded me has been wearing shoes stitched by my father. May I ask if my father ever stitched shoes that were not right? Were they weak, badly shaped, or did they wear out faster than they should? I remember he was stitching shoes with such joy that whosoever bought from him was very pleased with them. It will be difficult for me to be as good a president as my father was a cobbler."

If the right education was available, the prestige which becomes associated with positions, professions and things would disappear. There should be no stigma attached to making shoes, in baking bread or making bricks or building a house. Nobody is higher or lower -- they are all participating together in helping the same life.

Everything is needed in life. People making or cleaning roads are needed, and people preparing bricks are needed, as much as people ruling a country. Nobody is inferior, nobody is lower. There is no status for anyone; everybody together is creating a life of interdependence. Life is a cooperation. Nobody is higher in it, nobody is lower in it. The peon is not in any way inferior to the president. As long as these ideas of inferiority and superiority remain, there can be no peace for the human mind... because then the peon would want to be the president -- it is natural -- or if that is not possible, he would want his son to be a president. It is natural, he would want that.

The day on which our education does not associate the dignity of a person with his position or nature of work, the day on which we accept the importance of all work equally, for the benefit of life as a whole, we shall understand that the value of a cobbler and tailor is as much as that of a musician. The question is of how good and of what quality is the work one is doing, not what one is doing.

Kabir was a weaver, weaving cloth. People asked him to stop doing such work; it was not befitting a saint. He said, "If it befits a saint to wear clothes, why should it not befit him to make the clothes? The only difference there can be is that earlier when I was making cloth, I was thinking how I can get a greater price for what I was making from the customers. But it does not become a saint to charge more. Now when I am making cloth, I think of how to give a

better quality of cloth at a lesser cost. I am making stronger cloth with joy, and I feel as much joy selling to a customer as I would feel if God himself came to buy my cloth!"

He would go to the market dancing, and ask as to which god was going to accept his labor and prayer. He touched the feet of the person who bought his cloth, saying, "Oh God, wear the cloth carefully. I have woven it with great care and love, prayerfully and laboriously."

But is it wrong to weave cloth? Is it wrong to be a weaver? Nothing is wrong in life; everything, every work is required for life. There should be no status or position attached to any work. But our education is totally wrong. The peon in a school has no dignity. If that is really so, would any child like to be a peon?

It depends on the youth to change the outlook and bring about a revolution. Till then, thinking in terms of inferiority and superiority is going to continue.

A few days ago I was invited -- probably by mistake on the part of the organizers -- to give a talk on Teachers' Day. They said it is a great honor for teachers that a teacher has become a president. I said, "That is wrong. The teacher's honor is in being a good teacher, not in becoming a president. If all the teachers start running in the race to become a president, it will be a calamity." But that race is on. If they cannot become the president, they will want to be a state education minister or a vice-chancellor or something else.

It is altogether wrong. The respect and honor of a teacher is in being a good teacher. If a good teacher starts trying to become a president, it is not an honor for the teacher. One can understand a president giving up his position and becoming a teacher, but not vice versa. Why? -- because what comparison is there between a teacher and a politician? Becoming a politician is a fall for a teacher. It will be a growth for a politician if he becomes a teacher. Being a teacher is the simplest profession, a noble livelihood. It is a very fundamental basis for life. Teaching is not just a profession, it is a joy, a service, a creation, a devotion in itself. Anyone leaving it for something else will not be and should not be respected. But in our mind, politics and position have become very important. We are very strange people: a person sitting on a small stool becomes small!

A person I know narrated an incident. There was a magistrate in Madras, a British magistrate. He must have been a little idiosyncratic -- though it is a little difficult to decide who is not idiosyncratic at all, one way or another. He was sitting in a sort of courtroom. Whenever anyone came to meet him, he would order a particular type of seat for him.

He kept seven different types of seats in another room. According to status, position, wealth, he would order a seat to be brought in. A small stool was meant for an ordinary person, who might have to be allowed to sit. A poor person need not sit; he can say whatever he wants to while standing in front of the magistrate. After the small stool, there was the number two stool, a little better; then, third, a chair, stronger than a stool; then a better chair, and so on and so forth, up to number seven.

One day a person came who appeared to be poor. At first the magistrate thought of asking him to speak while standing, but on entering he said, "I am a land-tenancy holder in a particular town." The magistrate asked his peon to bring number two. The peon went outside and while he was bringing the number two seat in, the man said, "I was awarded the title of 'Rai Bahadur' by the government." On hearing that the magistrate asked his peon to bring the number four seat. As the peon was hurrying with the number four seat, the visitor said, "... And I recently donated a couple of million rupees to the War Fund." The magistrate shouted his modified order to the peon for seat number six, when the visitor interrupted, "Why do you harass the peon? Call for the number seven seat, because I have still to tell you more about myself by way of introduction. So better just call for the number seven seat."

We may laugh at such an idiosyncratic person, but we are all like him. In our mind there is respect for a president, for a prime minister or for a governor. Do we have any love and respect for just a man as such -- just empty, without any name, position, title or certificate, and whose pockets are also empty? If we do not have any respect for just a man, then remember that we have respect for nobody at all; what we have is respect for chairs, big and small.

But all this is what education teaches us. It is all rubbish, only worth burning. The whole educational arrangement is wrong. It is necessary to lay new foundations. Those new foundations will be that we should be taught love, not competition. We should be taught respect for a human being as such, not respect for position or money. It is necessary that respect should not be associated with the nature of a person's work. An attitude should be created where the whole life is considered a joint contribution of all people. Then with such a mental frame we can understand what the potential of an individual is, without any comparisons and evaluations.

As I told you earlier this morning, there is no necessity to compare, because every individual is unique in himself. It is not necessary to say that you are weaker than a certain man, or more intelligent or less handsome than a certain man. All such comparisons are dangerous and violent. The whole problem arises from that. Every person should be accepted as he is and his potential allowed to develop.

A rose is a rose, and a jasmine a jasmine. One tree will be tall and another short. A small grass flower is there -- but it has its own dignity and joy. What is mysterious and significant is that that grass flower should fully blossom, not remain half-way on its journey. It need not be compared with a roseflower. The roseflower has its own delight in

flowering, and the grass flower has its own. A small bird sings its song and a big bird sings its own. It is not a question of who has sung a better song, but the question is whether one could sing fully to one's heart's content. There is no comparison of one with the other.

Every individual is a unique creation of God, and we must accept him as such. We should keep in mind that our whole education, culture and civilization should draw out whatsoever is hidden and awaiting growth, and should not let anything remain dormant. This should happen, not in any haste, not with any dubious approach or competition, but through love and joy.

When all the potentialities of a person develop in their fullness and flower, he is full of joy. Then he has flowered; he is fragrant and peaceful. Such a person can search for truth and God and can know and experience truth. Only one who is peaceful in life can enter deeper into life. Whoever is in competition and disturbed will have no peace. Whosoever is peaceful, who accepts himself, who is joyful and fragrant due to his own flowering, will slowly receive automatically the messages of godliness; he will start experiencing godliness all around. A miserable man can never know God. When all the doors of bliss open within, only then begins the experiencing of God.

So the ultimate aim of education should be such as to lead every man to the total fulfillment of his soul and its experience. But at present the situation is such that a person is not able to experience happiness and peace in the world. God remains a faraway journey and destination. Because of this, because of his endless problems, man goes to the temple, puts money in the donation boxes, bows down to the priest. This is all useless. To save himself from tension, he seeks the help of God. When he is defeated in the elections, he seeks the help of God and gets amulets prepared, or takes tips from so-called religious priests to win at the racecourse.

Somebody was asking me yesterday if I give tips to win on the racecourse or not. All sadhus and sannyasins in our country do this. I said, "I am a very ordinary man, neither a sadhu nor a hermit; how can I give any such tips?" But there are great sadhus, sannyasins and mahatmas who can do that. Or if you come across God, he can help you. I am helpless. But all these kinds of things go on -- tips about horses and how to win elections. Those sadhus and mahatmas wander around Delhi because all the defeated and the winners both then touch their feet.

Tense, fearful, defeated and miserable people go to seek solace from religion. Such a religion becomes false. The very reason why these people go there is irreligious. Only a person who has pacified his mind in every way, whose mind has no struggles and knows no conflicts, whose mind is full of love and respect, who is compassionate to all and not envious, can reach anywhere near religion. One day God himself knocks at his door and puts a hand on his shoulder. Religious teaching does not mean repeating the Gita or the Koran. It is because of them that there is so much irreligion in the world.

The religious teaching should create a mind which is noncompetitive, nonjealous, nonviolent, loving and compassionate. Such a religious education will not make a man a Hindu or a Jaina or a Mohammedan. These are madnesses, they are diseases. No healthy and centered person can be a Hindu or a Mohammedan; he can only be religious.

I have told you a few things. If you try to understand your individuality against this background -- and think a little about whether you should really be competitive and envious or seek the path of peace, love and joy, and awaken some inner potential in yourself which releases the fragrance of bliss -- only then can you be a student in the right sense. Now, when the university is not right, the educational system is not right, where will we look for a solution? The teachers are not right, the educational system is not right; who will do this work?

The youth can do it. In them there are sparks of rebellion although in India the spark has almost died out. For thousands of years the youth have not been born here. There is no spirit of rebellion here, only ashes. But still, if there is any hope, it is only with the young people. If the young people rebel against the whole educational apparatus and system, and get ready to shatter all these structures, then if not today, tomorrow, the warmongering world can be ended; the world which believes in nations can be ended. These borders, India and Pakistan, all these idiocies can be ended; these walls between Hindus and Jainas can be ended. One human culture can take birth.

But it all depends on the youth. They will have to become rebellious. The burden of a great revolution rests on the shoulders of the youth. Perhaps human history has never before seen such a significant moment when there is such a great responsibility on the youth.

Just think, can this responsibility be taken up by us? If we can take up the responsibility, man can be saved. If not, then things are already too rotten, the matter is over. Then it is just a question of passing on the information, making the announcement that man is dead. It will not be long before all preparations for the death of man are complete. Any time we can be finished. Some fifty thousand atom and hydrogen bombs are ready to destroy the earth. They are far too many for the job -- they can destroy seven such earths.

What will happen? Even if we kill each person seven times, still we have made more arrangements than needed for it. If just one politician's mind goes mad -- and their minds are half-mad -- any moment he can take down the whole humanity with him.

Who will save it? On whom does the responsibility rest?

You may not have expected that I would talk to you and to your Center about such things. You may have thought I would tell you some methods to pass examinations, to succeed, to get ahead of others, to reach higher positions. No, I will not do that. Enough has been told to you about these things. We are suffering tremendously because of that.

I pray you do not succeed, but that you be real human beings. Success is not a value. I pray you do not reach any positions of power, but that you reach your inner being, where there is something worthwhile. I pray you do not compete with anyone, but awaken the potential of loving your own individuality. I pray that you too can become a brick in the creation of a new culture -- this is what I wish for you.

I am very grateful to you for having listened to me so silently, with such love. I offer my salutations to that new man that is residing within us all. Please accept my salutations to that god.

Revolution in Education

Chapter #4

Chapter title: Education and Religion

3 March 1967 pm in Sadar Vallabhai Patel University

There was a fakir who was very alone. He saw God in his dream and found that he was even more alone. The fakir was puzzled and asked God, "Why are you also so alone? You have many devotees -- where are they?"

On hearing this, God said, "I have always been alone, and hence only those who become absolutely alone are able to experience me. As for the second query, the so-called devotees and religious people have never been with me. Somebody is with Rama, somebody is with Krishna and somebody is with Mohammed or Mahavira. None of them is with me -- I am always alone. And therefore, one who is not with anyone and is all alone, is with me."

Shaken, the fakir awoke from the dream in the middle of the night and came running to me. He woke me and asked, "What is the meaning of such a dream?"

I said, "If it was a dream, I would have found some meaning, but this was the truth. Is it necessary to find the meaning of truth? Open your eyes and see. Those who are Hindus, Mohammedans, Buddhists or Christians because of an inherited religion are not religious. Religion can only be one. The boundaries created by man are not true for a religious mind. How can there be any cult, any scripture or any group, in experiencing truth? Where can there be a boundary for the boundless? How can there be a principle for the wordless? Where can you find a temple or a mosque in the void? What remains ultimately is God."

Before I tell you anything about education and religion, it is necessary to tell you that by religion I don't mean religions. To be religious is very different from being a Hindu or a Mohammedan. To follow any cult is not to be religious at all. On the contrary, that is the biggest obstacle to being religious. As long as somebody is a Hindu or a Mohammedan, it is not possible for him to be religious.

All those who are thinking about education and religion, and want to connect religion with education -- to them religion means Hindu, Mohammedan or Christian. Such religious teaching will not only not bring religiousness, but will make a man more irreligious. For five thousand years such education has been given, but it has not been able to create a better man or a better society. But more bloodshed, violence and irreligiousness has happened in the name of Hinduism, Mohammedanism or Christianity than anything else.

It is very surprising to find that the atheists -- who do not believe in any religion -- have not been responsible for such ugly crimes. Great crimes are committed by theists. Atheists have neither burned any temples nor have killed people; it is theists who have killed people. It is only theists who have divided man from man. Those who think themselves religious have created walls between one man and another. Words, doctrines and scriptures have made one man an enemy of another. Cults and 'isms' have dug insurmountable ditches and imprisoned humanity in small, self-created islands.

It is very dangerous to continue this type of education in the name of religion. Such education is neither religious, nor ever has been religious, nor can be religious in the future, because those to whom such things were taught have failed to be good human beings. The conflicts that have arisen due to these teachings have filled the whole mind of man with violence, anger and hate.

So the first thing that I want to tell you is that by education in religion I don't mean education in any cult, its beliefs and doctrines. If we want to connect education and religion we will have to break the relationship of religion with the words Hindu, Mohammedan or Christian. There should be no relation of any cults with education. Rather, it would be better to be irreligious, because the possibility of an irreligious man becoming religious is always there, but

the mind of a so-called religious man is closed forever. One whose mind is closed cannot become religious. To have an open and free mind is a must in the search for truth.

If a religious civilization has to be created it will be neither Hindu nor Mohammedan; it will neither be of the East nor of the West. Such a civilization will belong to the whole man, will belong to all and be for all. It cannot belong to any section or division, because as long as we divide humanity we will not be free from rivalries and wars. As long as there are walls dividing man from man, how can we create a society which will live in love and bliss? Whichever society has been created so far has not been based on love.

During three thousand years, fifteen thousand wars have been fought. Fifteen thousand wars in three thousand years? How unpleasant even to think about it. So many wars cannot be fought for no reason. Five wars every year -- what does it indicate? There is only a small span of three hundred years during which there was no war. These three hundred years are not in one stretch, but are made up of sometimes one day, sometimes two days, sometimes ten days of no war. Altogether there were three hundred years of peace. Three hundred years of peace and three thousand years of war? Certainly such peace cannot be true; it must be peace only in name. Even the period of peace is false: actually what we call the days of peace are the days spent in preparing for another war.

I am dividing the history of man in two parts -- one, the period of war and the other, the period of preparations for war. We have really not known any period of peace. In creating this situation, the division of humanity into many parts is basically responsible. And who has divided humanity? Is it not the religions, ideologies, doctrines and cults that have divided it? Is it not the nations, nationalities and confinements of ideologies that have divided it? It is mainly the religions that have divided humanity.

Behind all the quarrels and conflicts there are isms. Whether those isms are religious or political, they create conflict, and conflict ultimately leads to wars. Even today Soviet communism and American democracy have broken into two religions. It has become like a war between two religions. But I ask if it is not possible to stop the division of humanity which is done on the basis of thoughts. Is it right that for an insubstantial thing like thought, we should kill human beings? Is it right that your thought and my thought should make our hearts enemies of one another?

But so far this is all that has happened. And up till now unions formed in the names of nations and religions have not been unions of our love, but unions of our hatred. So you know that if the poison of hatred is spread forcefully, anyone can be made to unite. Adolf Hitler has said somewhere that if any race has to be united, it is necessary to create hatred for some other race. He not only said this, but he also did it and found it effective.

All mischief-mongers making this earth poisonous have found this method effective. By the slogan "Mohammedanism in danger," Mohammedans can be made to unite, and by the slogan "Hinduism in danger," Hindus can be made to unite. Danger creates fear, and there is hatred towards those of whom we are afraid. Thus all unions and organizations are based on hatred and fear. So while all religions talk of love because they need unity, they ultimately take only the help of hatred. Then love becomes only idle talk and hatred becomes the foundation.

So the religion I am talking about is not any union or organization, it is a spiritual endeavor. It is an experience of the individual, it is not interested in collecting a crowd. In fact, religious experience is basically individualistic.

And all our organizations are founded on some hatred. What relation can hatred have with religion? Whatsoever creates hatred between you and me cannot be religion. Only whatsoever creates love between you and me can be religion. Remember, whatsoever divides man from man, how can it ever join man with God? It is not possible. But what we call religion divides us. Though the so-called religions talk about love, talk about unity among all and talk about brotherhood, it is puzzling that the talk remains only talk, and whatsoever they do spreads enmity and hatred. Christianity talks about love, but nobody else has killed as many people as Christians have. Mohammedanism is a religion of peace, but who else has succeeded more in bringing unrest?

Perhaps good things become instrumental in hiding bad things. If you want to kill people, you can do so easily in the name of love. If one wants to be violent, one can easily be violent in protecting nonviolence. If I want to kill you, I can easily do so for your own good -- because in that case you will die but I will not be considered guilty. Then you will die, you will be killed and you will not complain.

It is said that man is an intellectual animal, so naturally, everything he wants to do he finds an intellectual way to do it. The devil has perhaps advised him to select a good slogan for doing a bad thing. The more evil a deed is, the better should be the slogan.

The organizations created in the name of religion have neither any relationship with God nor with love or prayer or religion. It is only your hatred and jealousy that are organized; otherwise, how is it possible that mosques are broken, temples are burned, idols are destroyed and people are killed? But this is happening and has been happening for a long time. If this is religion, my question is: What is irreligion then? Fanaticism is not religion. It is only the hidden form of irreligion.

So the first condition for education in religion is freedom of religion from all sects.

But the so-called religious people are giving nothing but sectarian poison to children in the name of religion. Why do they want to do it? Are they really interested in religion? No, they are interested in "their" religion. Such

interest itself is irreligious. Whenever religion becomes yours or mine, it ceases to be a religion. Wherever there is no mine or thine, there is the beginning that leads to the divine.

In the interest shown by the so-called religious people for religious education, there are selfish motives which have deep and ancient roots on which many types of exploitations depend. If the new generations escape from the prisons in which they are kept, a fundamental revolution is possible in the life of a society. Such a revolution will have multiple results in that all types of vested interests will be hurt, and those who are living by making man fight with man will lose their livelihood. All those who have made religious intrigues their profession will also become unemployed. Then it will not be possible to protect class exploitation and class interests, to exploit by dividing -- because so far only so-called religions have devised such protection in many forms.

In the name of religious education the old generation wants to pass on to the new generations their ignorance, blind faith, fanaticism, diseases and enmities. Their ego is satisfied in that way. This ego does not allow man to be free from unhealthy thought patterns. There is no bigger obstacle than this on the way to development. Development is possible only where there is rebellion.

The old generation's ego cannot accept any rebellion because it craves faithfulness, obedience and discipline. It educates the new generations for that. It wants to kill all that potential of the new generation which can inspire it to reject the old and set out to discover the new. But this foeticide is perpetrated in a very indirect way. Perhaps these people themselves are not aware fully of what is happening; it is an unconscious process. Their forefathers and teachers also had done the same thing to them. Unknowingly they continue to do the same thing to their children and pupils.

This vicious circle is ancient, but it has to be broken because it is not allowing life to unite with the truth of religion. Where is the center of this vicious circle? The central concept is: before the small children begin to think, seeds of belief have to be sown in them, because the mind full of belief is incapable of thinking.

The directions of belief and thinking are opposite. Belief is blindness; thinking is finding one's own eyes. By being blinded with belief, the children are deprived of their eyes forever. It is for such a harmful purpose that so-called religious people are so keen to give religious education. This keenness is not good. Actually there is no greater sin than killing the capacity to think. But parents have been constantly committing the same sin with their children, and this is the basic reason why the birth of true religion has not taken place.

Thinking is to be taught, not belief.

Right reasoning is to be taught, not trust.

Then only will religion cease to be blind faith and become a supreme science. With such a science, education can have a beneficial relationship. It is not by blind faith, but by testing the scientific truths on the touchstone of discriminatory thinking that man can be benefited.

Are you not aware that people living in the darkness of belief slowly become incapable of coming into the light of thinking? Their eyes become incapable of seeing anything but darkness. And they are training their children in this darkness so that they do not need to accept that they are blind themselves. It is convenient this way -- to believe that they are right. Whenever some child is able to save his eyes, in spite of this collective conspiracy, it is well known what they do with him. They do what they have done with Socrates and with Christ.

So while thinking about imparting education in religion, it is necessary to make sure that we are not planning to teach darkness in the name of light. So far, in the name of being given eyes, people are deprived of eyes. All beliefs are nothing but ignorance and darkness, so it is necessary to save children from beliefs.

It is possible to save children only if they are made capable of sharp and deep thinking. So develop the power of thinking in them. Don't give them thoughts, but give them the power to think. Giving thoughts is as good as giving beliefs. Given thoughts will be yours; the power of thinking will be their own. Only the full development of the power of thinking can make children capable of discovering the truth of life. Thinking is the path -- belief is going astray.

So I say that whoever is bound in belief can never think. Neither a Hindu, nor a Jaina, nor a communist, can think; his belief is his bondage. Since thinking may destroy his beliefs, he prefers not to think. It may become his protective amulet, but in fact such an amulet is nothing but suicide.

Is not belief the murder of thinking? But this murder is committed knowingly or unknowingly. A Hindu father wants to make his son a Hindu, and a Mohammedan father wants to make his son a Mohammedan -- that too when the child is very small and incapable of thinking and understanding. Such a wrong thing can only be done at an unripe age; it is difficult to do so afterwards. Once the power of thinking and logic has arisen it is not possible to throw dust in his eyes. The ability to think protects the individual, so it is no wonder if so-called religious people are against reasoning. Actually, they are against intelligence as such, because where there is logic, thinking and intelligence, there is rebellion.

Rebellion means looking for new ways of life.

Rebellion means a journey from the known to the unknown.

Rebellion means transcendence of the boundary lines the past generation leaves the new one with.

According to me, the ability to rebel is the soul of a religious mind, because there is no greater revolution than religion. Religion is the transformation of life from its roots.

So it is not possible for education in religion to be education in blindness and beliefs. It can only be education for deeper and deeper thinking. It is the sharpest logic. It is luminous intelligence. So innocent children should not be tied down with unintelligent beliefs and concepts; rather, their intelligence should be given such sharpness and depth that it will enable them to keep their thinking conscious and free, and they will never be willing to sell it at any cost. Only such free consciousness can open the doors to truth.

In fact freedom is the door to truth.

So give freedom to children and create respect for freedom in their minds. Make them cautious and aware of all types of slaveries of consciousness and mind. Real education in religion can only be this.

But the teaching of religions is not such; it is just the opposite. It is only a training in slavery, because it is supportive of belief and not thinking. It is in favor of blindness, rather than eyes. It is based on following others and not on one's own consciousness.

Why are religions so afraid of thinking? Certainly the fear is not without any reason. The most important and solid reason is this, that if the thinking is conscious and active, many religions cannot last for too long. Religiousness will be there but the existence of religions will certainly be in danger, because the natural flow of thinking is towards universal truth. Just as the rivers flow towards the ocean, all thinking flows towards universality. Only the truth that abides after impartial investigation finally remains. And truth cannot be more than one, it is always one.

Because science followed right thinking, the arithmetic of Hindus and Christians is not separate. On the basis of belief it would not be possible that arithmetic be one. The pools of belief do not flow; they are closed unto themselves. Since they cannot flow towards the ocean, they can never reach to that which is one. Their very confinement in themselves makes them many.

Thinking is a flow -- belief is stagnation.

Thinking is a constant transcendence of oneself.

Belief is to be imprisoned in oneself.

So from wheresoever thinking begins, in the end it leads to the central and ultimate truth. Belief prevents one from reaching that far.

I have heard that there existed a geography of the Jainas. Such funny things happen with religions! Can geography also be separate? Yes, if belief is the basis, it can be. Where there is no thinking, there is only fantasy, following and blind faith. And these can be separate for every individual. Truth is one, but the dreams of every person can be different. Even if two persons want to, they cannot have the same dream together.

Truth is always the same for all because it is residing in one's self. It is not imagination, a dream or an inference of any individual. One must deserve first to know the truth. To be able to see it, one must have healthy and open eyes. Such eyes are obtained only in perfect thinking and in the light of intelligence.

That is why I am repeatedly saying that if you want to give truth to children, give them the capacity to think. Make them free from just belief and give them intelligence. The awakened energy of thinking will make them capable of seeing and it will become their seeing. That alone will lead them to the ocean of truth, which is one and nondual.

Do you know that a person like Aristotle has written that women have fewer teeth than men? How could he write this? Did he not have a woman available to enable him to count her teeth? There is no dearth of women. But he just accepted a current belief, so there remained no question of any investigation. He himself had not one but two wives; he could have asked one of them to open her mouth for him to count her teeth. But no, when he did not doubt the current belief, how could he think? He just agreed to the blind belief of males that women have fewer teeth than men. In fact the male ego is never ready to accept that women can be equal to men in anything whatsoever, even if the matter is just of teeth! If a person of the stature of Aristotle did not doubt, who else can? -- though doubt is in fact the beginning of all search.

The very first step to be taught in the search for truth is right doubt. A good beginning of religious education should be that. The real foundation of religion is doubt, not trust.

Doubt is the beginning, trust is the end.

Doubt is the search, trust is the achievement.

So whosoever begins with doubt, sometime or other does reach trust. But one who begins from trust reaches nowhere. There is no question of his reaching, because he has attached the bullocks behind the cart. Beginning is possible only with that which is the beginning. How can an end be the beginning? Where there is no doubt, there is no thinking. Where there is no thinking, there is no intelligence. Where there is no intelligence, there is no truth.

Religions have taught belief -- neither doubt nor search.

Religion will teach one to doubt, to think and to search. Only whatsoever is obtained by one's own search is self-transforming, and is the truth.

Truth is a continuous search. It is an investigation with extreme awareness. Truth cannot be transferred by one to the other, it has to be searched for by one's own self. Truth cannot be borrowed; it is the fruition of one's own efforts. Education in religion is a preparation for such a search.

So as long as religion is related to belief, there can be no education in religion. It may be called education in religion but it will be only Hindu, Mohammedan or Christian. Such education is not religious, because people educated like this become narrow-minded. That way heartfulness cannot arise. Such people are full of prejudices. Their intelligence does not become free, but it dies. Such people become old in the mind, whereas for any search the mind must be fresh and young.

Only those who are impartial are young. Only those are young who have not allowed their consciousness to be imprisoned in conditioning. The conditioned mind becomes old, and the more conditioned it is, the more idiotic. Conditioning is not religion. Only the consciousness which is free of all conditioning can enter into religion.

Religion is your nature, your own self. Conditioning comes from outside; it is an outsider. Just as dust covers the mirror, conditioning covers consciousness. To cover the mirror of consciousness with traditions, conditionings, orthodoxies, beliefs and ideals in the name of religion is not to be allowed: it has to remain free of them. The real education and search for religion makes one proceed in the direction of freedom. Religion is the only means that frees the mind of all complexes, but the religion that is sold in the market cannot do that work.

So before religion enters education, it will have to give up its old clothes and abode. It can become the soul of new generations only by itself acquiring a new soul.

Religion is certainly to be brought into our lives. Without it our life is very handicapped, incomplete and unbalanced. If we continue to think of the outer only, the inner will remain empty. If our eyes are focussed only on matter, we will remain deprived of God. That will be a costly bargain, because we will be losing diamonds and taking stones instead. What is the outer compared to the inner? What is the wealth of the world compared to the wealth of God? We have to know that which is the very life and center of all, and we have to make its search our central concern, because the search for the center can never be completed without making the search central.

So I do not want religion just to be related to education, because that is insufficient. I want to see religion become the center of all education, because it is essential that the center of life be the center of education too. Life does not end just at what is visible; in reality, the invisible is its basis. Without being acquainted with the invisible, there will be no purpose or meaning in life. Where there is no meaning, how can there be any bliss? Bliss is the attainment of meaningfulness.

Religion is a search for meaning, and science is a search for utility. Both religion and science are incomplete. In the synthesis and balance of the two is the benediction and wholeness.

One world is outside man, but that is not all; there is another world within man. And the search outside is ultimately for the within. While searching for the outer, the inner is not to be forgotten, because in the search for the outer you gain strength, but you do not gain peace; you gain wealth, but you lose your soul. What is the value of the whole world if you lose your soul? Your victory is a defeat.

There was a Sufi saint, Rabiya. One morning her friend asked her to come out of her hut. He said, "A beautiful sun is rising in the sky and the morning is pleasant."

Rabiya replied, "My dear friend, I invite you to come within, because I am seeing within the creator of that sun and the morning. Is it not better that you come inside? I have seen the outer beauty very well, but you are perhaps unacquainted with what is inside."

There is one world outside. Certainly it is beautiful. Those who want to set man against the outer world are ignorant. Those who are condemning this outer world are against the good of man. The outer world is really beautiful, but there is another inner world which is limitlessly more beautiful. One who stops at the outer world stops at the incomplete. He has made camp very early; he has misunderstood the road to be the destination. He has mistaken the door for the palace and has stopped at the entrance. He has to be awakened and alerted. His eyes have to be drawn towards the destination. Once that is done he himself will continue his journey further.

The aim of education in religion is to see that children remain always aware of this destination and don't stop midway. It is necessary to know that science is a search only into that which is outside. The outer search alone is incomplete. Education must be related with the inner search.

But the religions that we know do not go in search of the inner. They talk about the inner, but they are lying, because their temples and mosques are built outside and their idols are also outside. Their scriptures are outside, their doctrines are outside, and they are seen fighting over these outer things. Their insistence is only on the outer, so they cannot take man into his inner abode.

A negro went to a church one morning and requested the priest of the church to allow him to enter. But how can a man with black skin enter into a church of people with white skin? These people who talk about the inner also see the color of the skin. These people who talk of God also see whether a man is a brahmin or a sudra. The priest of the church said, "Friend, what will you do, coming inside the church? As long as your mind is not pure and peaceful, what can you do by coming into the church?"

Because the times have changed, the priest has changed his language also. Before he used to say, "Go away, nigger. How can you enter here?" He has changed his language, but his heart has not changed; even now he does not allow the black man in. But he did not say, "You are a sudra and therefore impious, so go away!" He said, "Friend, what will you do by coming in? How will you know God till your mind is pure and peaceful? So first go and purify your mind."

But he had not said such a thing to any people with white skin... as if they had all attained peace of mind. The simple negro went away. The priest must have laughed within. He may have thought that now the negro will not come back, because he cannot purify his mind. In fact, the black man did not come back, not because his mind could not become peaceful, but because his mind had become peaceful.

Many days passed by... about a year passed. Then one day the priest saw that black man passing near the church. He had become a different man altogether. In his eyes there was some light of the other world. Around him it was as if there was an aura of peace and music. The priest thought perhaps he was coming into the church. He was a little afraid too, but his fear was baseless; the negro did not even look at the church but went on straight ahead.

Then the priest ran after him and stopping him, asked, "Friend, you did not come back again?"

The negro laughed and said, "My friend and guide, I thank you very much. I have passed the whole year according to your advice. I was expecting to become peaceful so that I could come into the church. But last night in my dream I saw God, who told me, 'You madman! Why did you want go to that church to meet me? For the last ten years I myself have been trying to enter the church, but the priest does not allow me to do so. Where I have not been able to enter, it is impossible that you will be allowed!'"

I can tell you that God has not only not been able to enter that church, he has not been able to enter any church or temple -- because churches and temples built by men have not been bigger than man; these temples are so small that there is no place for God in them. In reality, those whose minds are themselves not temples can build only meaningless temples. Those who have not found him within cannot find him on the outside.

The divine first manifests within oneself, and then manifests everywhere. Except one's own self, there is neither any path nor bridge to the whole. One's own self is the nearest to oneself, so it is better to search within before you search without. One who cannot find the divine in the nearby, cannot find it in the faraway. The divine has been known and can be known only in the heart, not in the temples. So the temples and the mosques cannot and should not be connected with education. Insistence upon such a connection is for the outer. All such outer phenomena become obstacles for going within.

When I hear talk about building temples in universities, I laugh. I wonder if man is learning anything from history. Do we not know what the religions of temples and mosques have done? No, there is no necessity for outside rituals of religions. It would be tolerable if such rituals were only useless, but they are disastrous. There is no religion in the outer, so it is irreligious to give any value to the outer. It is very necessary to be as clear about this truth as one is about the fact that two plus two makes four.

There is a temple of God, but it is not made of stones and bricks. Whatsoever is made of stones and bricks can be of a Hindu, a Christian, a Jaina or a Buddhist, but not of God. Whatsoever belongs to somebody just for that reason does not belong to God. His temple can have no limits because he is limitless. His temple can have no epithet because he is the whole. Certainly, such a temple can be only of consciousness. Such a temple is not there in the sky, it is in the soul. It has not to be made, it is there forever; it has only to be uncovered.

So a religion related to education cannot be one that builds temples and mosques. It can be a religion that uncovers the temple hidden within the self. Whatsoever is residing within is to be known, because knowing that becomes a fundamental revolution in life.

Knowing the truth becomes the transformation of life.

The education which does not uncover the inner truth or God is incomplete and dangerous.

The reason for the failure of education until today is its incompleteness. The young man who comes out of the university is very inadequate. What is central to life is not known to him. He is not acquainted with whatever is of truth, goodness, and beauty in life. He comes out having learned the trivial, and lives in that for his whole life.

Such a life does not bring any bliss, and slowly a meaninglessness and emptiness and futility begins to surround the mind. The flow of life gets lost in this desert of meaninglessness, and as a result a sort of blind anger towards everything is left. I call this anger an outcome of an irreligious mind. The outcome of a religious mind is a sense of gratitude and benediction; it is a gratefulness towards the whole. But this can happen only when life is blissful and total. Such bliss and totality is not possible till one knows oneself.

So right education cannot be religionless, because knowing and being acquainted with the foundation of life -- consciousness, the interiority, the soul -- is a must in bringing life to its fulfillment.

What is religion? The education of man's interiority is religion. What shall we teach then? Should we teach scriptures and religious principles? Or should we tell the children that there is a God, there is a soul, heaven, hell and liberation? No, not at all. No such education is the education of religion. Such education does not lead man to his

interiority. Such education makes a man prejudiced. Such education is only the teaching of words. It gives birth to false knowledge, which is even more dangerous than ignorance.

Knowledge is only that which comes from self-experience. Knowledge learned from others is not knowledge but an illusion of knowledge. Such illusion hides ignorance, and the search for knowledge stops. A clear awareness about one's ignorance is good because it leads one towards the search for knowledge. It is very dangerous to think knowledge learned from others is real knowledge, because the satisfaction that one gets through that binds one's feet and obstructs the journey ahead.

I went once to an orphanage -- there were about a hundred children. The organizers told me that they are also giving education in religion to the children. Then they asked the children a few questions. They were asked if there is a God. They replied "Yes, there is a God." They were asked, "Where is God?" They pointed towards the sky in reply. They were asked, "Where is the soul?" They kept their hands on their hearts and said, "Here."

I was watching this drama. The organizers were very happy. They told me to ask them some questions. I asked one child, "Where is the heart?" That child began to look hither and thither and said, "This has not been taught to us." Can education in religion be like this? And can repeating what is taught be called knowing? If it was such a simple matter the world would have become religious long ago.

I told the organizers of that orphanage that whatsoever they were teaching the children is not religion at all. On the contrary, the children will become parrotlike for their whole life. A person who learns to repeat things mechanically paralyzes his intelligence. When questions arise in life that could lead him to the search for truth, his learning will make him repeat what was learned and be quiet. Your teaching will kill their inquisitiveness. They do not know either God or the soul. The hands were so false that pointed towards their hearts! Do you call this teaching of falsehood education in religion?

I asked the organizers whether their knowledge of self was also like that of the children; whether they were also only repeating what was taught to them. They also looked here and there, like the child whom I had asked where his heart was. Generation after generation we go on teaching empty words and consider it knowledge. Can truth ever be taught? Can truth be repeated?

In the world of matter there is value for what is taught, because about whatsoever is outside no knowledge other than information is possible. But in the world of consciousness information has neither any meaning nor value because the world of consciousness is of experience, not of information.

It is possible to experience; one can be and live in such experience, but it cannot be taught. Learning it can only be like acting. Can anyone learn to love? If one can love after learning it, it will only be acting love. If love cannot be learned, how can prayer be learned? So everything learned about God -- principles, worship and prayer -- has become only acting. Prayer is a deeper form of love. When love cannot be learned, how can God be learned? The totality of love is God.

Truth is unknown, so through principles, scriptures and words which are known, one cannot reach the truth. For entering into the unknown, whatsoever is known has to be given up. On our becoming free of what is known, the unknown manifests before us. So religion is more of an unlearning than a learning. Religion consists more of forgetting than of remembering. We do not have to write anything on the mind; instead, all that is written has to be wiped out, because as soon as the mind becomes wordless, it becomes a mirror for knowing the truth. We do not have to make the mind a storehouse of doctrines but a mirror of truth. Then the meaning of education in religion will be more of a seeking than indoctrination.

Preparation for religious seeking is the only education in religion. Education in religion is not like the education in other subjects, so there can be no examination in it. Its examination will be in life; life itself is its examination.

Except life itself, what other examination can there be of life? And religion is life itself.

So those who think that by passing examinations they have become educated are mistaken. Actually, where the examinations are completed the real education begins, because from then on life begins.

Then what should we do for education in religion?

The seed of religion is there in everybody because life is there in everybody. We should create opportunities for the growth of that seed, and remove the obstacles on the path of that growth. If this can be done, the seed sprouts on its own, out of its own strength, out of its own longing for life; it does not have to manufacture sprouts. The sprout becomes a full-fledged plant, the plant becomes full of leaves, flowers and fruits. We only provide an opportunity, and all else follows by itself.

How can there be an education in religion? The schools can provide the atmosphere and opportunity for the seed of religion to sprout. The schools can help remove the obstacles to its growth. In doing this, there are three very vital elements.

The first element is courage. One must have irrepressible courage. Courage is the basic requirement in the search for truth and for climbing to God. Courage is needed to climb the Himalayas and to reach the depths of the Pacific, but in the search for God, greater and deeper courage is necessary because there is no higher peak and no deeper ocean than God. But the so-called religious people are not courageous. In fact their religiousness is a mask for

their cowardliness. There is fear behind their religion and God. I would like to tell you that a fearful mind can never be religious, because fearlessness is the very life of religion. Courage arises from fearlessness.

So the first thing is not to teach fear of any type, or of anything.

The second is to educate in fearlessness. What a great strength, luminosity and light fearlessness is! It is on the rock of fearlessness that the temple of religion is built.

But our so-called religions are exploiting fear, and so to date it has not been possible to build the temple of religion. Can temples be built on the quicksand of fear? Even if they are, how long can they last? When I go to temples, mosques and churches, I find that people trembling with fear have gathered there. Their prayers are embodied forms of their fears, and the God in front of whom they kneel down is the very projection of their fear. So man runs towards God during difficulties, because he is more fearful at that time. In old age man runs towards God because his approaching death makes him very fearful. Go to the temples and churches: you will find only such people who are nearing death or who are as good as dead.

We do not want to teach fear. Fearlessness is to be taught, only then can religion be for alive people. What is the fear of teaching fearlessness? There is one fear -- that a young man may deny God. This fear is there because our very concept of God is based in fear. But what is wrong in denying such a God? In fact, accepting such a God is wrong.

I would like fearlessness to grow to such an extent where even that God whom we have not known can be denied. Where there is no denial of untruth, there is no fearlessness. Where there is no denial of untruth, how can there be the search for truth?

According to me, the atheism arising out of fearlessness is nothing but the other side of theism. Such atheism is a must, it becomes a ladder to theism. One who cannot even be an atheist, how can he be a theist? Theism is more difficult than atheism. One who is afraid of becoming an atheist will be a false theist. He becomes a theist out of fear of becoming an atheist. Of what value can such theism be?

I respect an atheism based on fearlessness more than a theism rooted in fear, because where there is fear, there can be no religion, and where there is fearlessness, there is the door to religion. It is an experience, a joy to pass through an atheism born out of fearlessness. Through it the soul definitely becomes more strengthened. One who becomes a theist before becoming an atheist is a false theist because the inner atheist continues to hide within. One who has lived through his atheist within, transcends it and becomes free of it.

Atheism means the period of non-acceptance. If the society is against God and religion, then to deny that too is atheism. Passing through non-acceptance of things widely accepted and believed is atheism. For the maturity of the individual such a period is very valuable and beneficial. One who does not pass through it remains immature forever. This passing through non-acceptance is possible only if one has courage and fearlessness.

What is the greatest courage? Non-acceptance of false knowledge is the greatest courage.

If you do not know that "God is," do not just believe it. However much someone may pressure you, allure you by promising heaven, or make you afraid by cursing you to go to hell, do not ever agree to believe in what you do not know. Better to give up heaven or be ready to go to hell, but it is not right to be fearful. Only one who has such courage is capable of discovering the truth. What can a fearful mind do? It is ready to believe anything only because of its fear. In a theist society such a mind becomes a theist. If he is in Soviet Russia he will become an atheist. He is just a dead limb of the society, he is not a living individual, because life in an individual comes only out of fearlessness.

One man met me just yesterday. He said he believes in the immortality of the soul -- and all over his face, fear of death was written. I asked him if his belief was because of the fear of death, because those who are afraid of death feel great solace in being told that the soul is immortal.

On hearing that, he became a little troubled and asked, "Isn't the soul immortal then?"

I said, "It is not a question of the mortality or immortality of the soul. The question is whether a person who is afraid of death can ever know or search for the soul. Fearlessness is very necessary in the search for truth."

I want to say the same to you: A man believes in the immortality of the soul in the same proportion as he is afraid of death. The belief is as strong as is the fear. Can such a man ever be ready to open his eyes to the truths of life? The path to truth passes from nowhere else but fearlessness.

The immortality of the soul is not the belief of a fearful mind but a reality encountered by a totally fearless consciousness.

A fearful mind does not seek the truth but seeks security. A fearful mind does not seek the truth but seeks consolation. Then he catches hold of any belief that gives him security and consolation. What security and consolation can concepts and beliefs provide? Except in truth there is no security, contentment and peace. In order to realize truth, it is necessary that the mind have the courage to give up false securities and consolations.

So I call courage the greatest religious virtue.

A teacher, a priest, was teaching some children about courage, and the children asked him to give an example. The teacher said, "Let us assume that twelve children were staying in one room in a resthouse in the mountains. The night was very cold. When these children were going to bed after a tiring day, eleven of them drew their blankets

over themselves and slept. But there was one boy who knelt down in one corner of the room to say his night prayer. I call this courage. Isn't that boy courageous?"

Just then one boy stood up and said, "Let us assume that there are twelve priests staying in a resthouse. If eleven priests kneel down in prayer before sleep, and if one priest draws his blanket over himself and sleeps, is he not courageous?"

I do not know through what embarrassment that priest had to pass. I also do not know how he escaped the predicament created by the children. But I definitely know one thing -- that the ability to be one's own self is courage. The ability to be a man free from the crowd is courage.

To make a person his individual self is to give him courage. Confidence in one's own self is courage. Courage is self-confidence.

Along with courage, teach awareness. This is the second important element in education in religion.

If there is no awareness, mere courage can be dangerous, because instead of becoming self-confidence it can become insane ego. Courage is power, but awareness is the eye. One can walk with courage but only with awareness can one see where one is going.

You may have heard the story of a blind man and a lame man. There was fire in a jungle, and the blind man and the lame man had to save their lives. The blind man could run but could not see. In a jungle that has caught fire, it is as good as inviting death if one who has no eyes begins to run. The lame man could see but could not run. What is the value of eyes that have no legs? Then they thought of a way out and saved their lives. What was the method? Very simple. The blind man carried the lame man on his shoulders.

This story is not of a blind man and a lame man -- it is a story of courage and awareness. If one has to save his life in a jungle of ignorance that is on fire, it is necessary to make awareness sit on the shoulders of courage.

Ordinarily, a man lives unconsciously, as if in sleep. That sleep is of self-forgetfulness. That sleep can be broken by becoming conscious and aware through self-remembrance. The children can be educated in the direction of self-remembrance, right remembrance of one's own self, and self-awareness.

The arrow of consciousness is ordinarily pointing outwards. We are aware only about whatsoever is outside us; but that arrow of consciousness can be pointed towards one's own self also. What we experience then is our very being. Becoming aware of that is the happening which leads one from the sleepy life of darkness to the awakened life of light.

The prayers, devotional songs and music going on in the name of religion do not bring any self-remembrance in us, rather they bring self-forgetfulness. The happiness of such people is that of unconsciousness and sleep. These are all mental intoxicants.

I call full consciousness and awareness the search for religion. A university can become a foundation for, and provide an opportunity for, learning awareness. Awareness at the level of body, mind and soul can be taught. Doing everything with awareness slowly fills one's life with consciousness. The endeavor to remain aware and be a witness to every mental activity has the capacity to make one's mind awake in an unprecedented way. At the same time, remaining aware each moment of what one is becomes self-realization in the end.

The third step is silence.

Words, words and words fill one's mind with too much tension and restlessness. Thinking, thinking and thinking, the mind loses all its relaxedness. Silence means relaxation of the mind. It is by knowing silence and living it that the mind always remains fresh and youthful. In total silence the mind becomes a mirror in which truth reflects.

What can a restless mind know? What can it search? It is so involved in itself that it cannot look in any other direction. Deep peace, total silence and the totally relaxed state of a thoughtless mind are required for knowing the truth. Such a state of mind is meditation.

Children can be led into the direction of a restful mind. To leave the mind totally relaxed and free is the fundamental rule for mind-rest. It is like floating in a river, not swimming; similarly, floating on the waves of mind, not swimming at all, an effortless effort takes one into a deep peacefulness which is not otherwise known to man.

Whatsoever meaning and joy is hidden within life, it all uncovers itself in such peacefulness. Whatever is the truth of life is also attained. In fact, it was already the case but we were not aware of it because of our restlessness, and in peace it is uncovered and comes face to face with you.

The education in religion is education in courage, awareness and peace. The education in religion is education in fearlessness, awareness and thoughtless silence. Such an education can definitely become the foundation stone for a new humanity.

I hope you will think over what I have said. You do not have to believe what I have said, you have to think and contemplate on it. You have to give unbiased thinking to it. You have to test it on the touchstone of experiment. From every fire test, the truth comes out more refined.

Revolution in Education

Chapter #5

Chapter title: Knowledge is That Which Liberates
23 September 1968 pm in Birla Krida Kendra, Bombay, India

Sa Vidya Ya Vimuktaye. Knowledge is that which liberates.

This morning I would like to say a few things to you on this subject. This is a marvellous saying. It is the most original definition of knowledge. This is the definition of knowledge as well as its criterion. But perhaps you may not know the other side of the situation. We are not liberated. Whatsoever we have learned cannot have been right knowledge, it must be false knowledge. Our life has not known what liberation is, so the schools in which we have studied must not have been schools but anti-schools, because the very test and definition of knowledge is that it helps us in our life to attain the bliss of liberation.

What shall we call that knowledge which has not given that joy? In the whole world knowledge goes on increasing, schools, colleges and universities go on increasing, but man does not seem to have been liberated. Instead man goes on becoming more bound and conditioned and falling further downwards.

Then could it be that we have made some fundamental mistake? Could it be that this increasing knowledge is false knowledge? I would like to say to you that it is false knowledge. I have no doubt about it. I am certain that what we are propounding as knowledge in the world is false knowledge, because the soul of man does not seem to be becoming free through it, but instead it is enslaving and imprisoning man. The consciousness of man does not become elevated by it but seems to be falling down. The life force of man does not seem to be progressing towards divinity, but is falling downwards towards animality.

Can we call people educated this way really educated? With good intentions we are working ceaselessly to spread this education. Good people are making great efforts to increase the numbers of schools, colleges and hostels so that man becomes educated. But the experience of the last two thousand years tells a different story.

On the one hand, knowledge increases; on the other, man seems to be deteriorating. On one hand education increases; on the other the quality of life seems to be degenerating. On the one side man's intellect is developing; on the other side man's soul seems to be falling apart. There is something fundamentally wrong. Something from the very beginning has gone wrong with our movement and direction, so in whatever direction we move it does not bring any bliss.

In the world today there is more learning, more education and more universities than during any previous century, but there is also more misery, pain and lack of peace than in any previous century. Man's life is more ruined by the current education. With high hopes and good intentions we are educating our children. We have our great dreams and desires for our children's growth but in educating them we find that they have fallen low. Before our very eyes we see this happening, yet we increasingly go on creating the same type of education, colleges and hostels. It is difficult to conceive that there can be anyone more blind and foolish than man. Man has not learned anything from his past experiences, he has not learned any lessons.

I am reminded of a small event. Buddha had arrived in a town -- there was a poor cobbler named Sudas in that town. When Sudas got up in the morning, he saw in the lake behind his hut a lotus flower in full bloom, unseasonally; this was not the season for the lotus to blossom. Sudas thought, "If I take this flower to the market today, I am certain to find a customer who will buy it for one rupee. It is an unseasonal flower -- somebody will certainly buy it." He plucked the flower and started off for the market, thinking, "I shall really be blessed if I get one rupee."

While he was on the road he saw the chariot of the richest man of the town passing by. Seeing the lotus, the rich man stopped the chariot and asked Sudas at what price he would sell. Sudas could not quote the price he wanted -- one rupee -- but instead said it was unseasonal and that the rich man might pay what he thought right. The rich man said, "I am giving you five hundred gold coins -- do not sell it to anyone else."

While the rich man was saying this, the commander-in-chief of the king pulled up on his horse and stopped and addressed Sudas: "I will purchase the flower for ten times the price the rich man is offering."

Sudas said, "Have you people gone mad?" The rich man was paying five hundred gold coins and the commander was ready to pay ten times that price! While he was saying this the chariot of the king came and the king said, "The flower is purchased by me, for ten times the price agreed to by the commander."

Sudas was surprised. What has happened to these people! He said, "I was not expecting even one rupee for this flower and you people are ready to pay such a high price? What is the reason?"

The king said, "You are not aware: Buddha arrived in the town and we are going to receive him. I myself would like to offer this unseasonal flower to Buddha, because he would not imagine that today someone could offer such a lotus flower at his feet! Who would not want to have such an opportunity to offer a rare flower?"

Sudas said, "In that case, there is no question of selling this flower; I myself shall offer the flower to Buddha."

The king tried to persuade him not to, saying, "Have you gone mad, Sudas?" Up till now Sudas was thinking that the rich man, the commander and the king had gone mad. Now all the three said, "Sudas, don't be mad! The poverty of your past and future generations will be destroyed by selling the flower."

Sudas said, "The poverty of all my lives is destroyed now -- I myself shall offer the flower."

Sudas started walking towards the end of the town, where Buddha was expected to enter. The king, the commander and the rich man all reached there far ahead of Sudas. They informed Buddha of this most astonishing thing that had happened: "Today the poorest cobbler of the town refused to sell his lotus flower for any price. He wanted to offer it himself at your feet."

Sudas came and offered the flower at the feet of Buddha, and Buddha asked him, "Oh, mad Sudas, why didn't you sell the flower? It would have made life comfortable for your many future generations."

Sudas replied, "My lord, money cannot be higher than love. The soul cannot be sold for rupees. As long as it was just a flower, I wanted to sell it. But the moment I thought of your feet, there was no question of selling; I myself could offer it. Poor people too can love. Poor people too can respect. Poor people too can trust. Poor people too have a soul. Please accept the flower!"

Buddha then addressed his disciples and said, "Though Sudas is not literate, he is really learned, educated. He does not know how to read and write, but still he is really learned."

One of the disciples asked Buddha, "What do you mean by 'really learned'?"

Buddha replied, "Whosoever is aware of the higher values in life and who can give up lower values for higher ones, is really learned. Sudas has rejected money for the sake of love."

Can we call people of today "really learned," who reject love for money? Can we call people of today educated whose whole education is destroying higher values and embracing lower values? Can we call those learned who are always ready to give up the supreme for the petty, who are ready to sell the soul for the body, who have no higher value than money, for whom there is no other journey in life than reaching a position of power, and those in whose life and mind the meaningful receives less attention than the meaningless?

Can such learning liberate? No, it cannot. We are making our children engineers, doctors, mathematicians and chemists. But that is not education, that is only a means and method to earn a livelihood; it is only an arrangement for earning in a better way. We are sending our children to Europe and America for further education, and one may think one has done something very great in doing so. But we are only teaching them to earn their bread more efficiently -- nothing more than that. We are not educating them nor establishing any connection with education, because education means a birth of real and higher values in life.

What will the birth of real and higher values in life mean? If there is such a birth, man will become liberated, man will become full of bliss. The more life moves towards higher values, the more the bonds go on falling.

What are the bonds? What are the shackles? They are of lower values.

What is liberation? A journey to the heights, going higher and higher, transcending oneself day after day. A journey to loftier heights is real learning, knowledge. Do we teach transcendence of oneself? No, we teach selfishness, exploitation, hoarding for one's own self. We teach how to somehow fulfill our desires and expectations more proficiently, and we think we are giving our children real learning. Nothing can be more meaningless than this idea.

In one old seer's school, three students were declared successful in their final examination. However, their teacher was telling them every now and then that the last examination was still to be taken. The last day of school arrived. They were given their degrees; the convocation ceremony was over and their final examination was still not taken. The students kept quiet; perhaps the teacher had forgotten. They packed their books, clothes and bedding, and went to their teacher in the evening to receive his last blessings before departure and then left him.

On their way they were thinking of the last examination. It was late in the evening and they had to reach the next village before nightfall. The road was rough and passed through a jungle; it was getting dark and there were wild animals in the area. They saw a narrow path through a thicket covered with lots of thorns.

One of the students jumped over the thorns. The second student went down the side road and bypassed the thorns. The third student put down his belongings and slowly started collecting the thorns and throwing them out of the way.

His friends told the third one, "Are you mad? -- darkness is descending, we have to reach the village fast. There is no time to pick up the thorns. We have no time -- come quickly!"

The third one replied, "If it was daytime there would be no danger; whoever passed would see the thorns. But after we pass by it will be so dark that the thorns will not be seen. If knowing this we pass by without thinking about those who may follow, our education will be meaningless. I will clear away the thorns -- you can go on."

Meanwhile, the seer who was hiding in the bush jumped out. He himself had put the thorns on the path. It was their final examination. The seer said the other two students who had already crossed the thorns should go back to the school -- they had failed in the last examination. Only the third student, who cleared away the thorns, cleared the final examination too.

One who has known how to remove the thorns in life is really educated, learned. One who would clear the thorns for others will one day spread flowers on the road for them. But the one who sees the thorns on the path and, ignoring them, passes by, is bound someday to spread thorns on others' paths.

The last examination is always of love. Love is always the ultimate value. The supreme heights in life are those of love. The Everest, the highest peak of life, is the peak of love.

Is our education teaching love? Our education is not even aware of love. Our education teaches ego instead. Ego and love are two opposite values. Where there is ego, there is no love. Where there is love, there is no ego. Current education teaches ego, and from the very childhood we make all arrangements to sharpen the ego.

A child enters his elementary class and we ask him to come first. One who comes first is rewarded. Those who come last are not rewarded and are ignored. If there are thirty students in a class, only one of them can come first. The happiness of one boy is being based on the misery and frustration of the remaining twenty-nine. This is the education we are providing.

One who has come first is happy and joyful, not because he came first but because he has left the rest behind. We are teaching violence. Violence has only one meaning: it means nothing other than experiencing happiness in others' misery. One is not free of violence just by drinking germless water or just by not eating food at night. The meaning of violence is just this: being happy in others' misery.

And what else do we teach our children than to feel happy in others' misery? If there is only one student in a class, he will come first, but he will not be happy. But if there are thirty students in the class and if he comes first, he will be happy for having left the twenty-nine behind. If there are three thousand students and he comes first, his happiness is greater. If there are three lakh students, his happiness and joy will know no bounds. In becoming a president of a country, leaving behind the rest of the population of that country, one becomes very elated. That is why politics is violence -- because it is a race to come first.

Religion is just a different direction. Knowledge is just a different direction.

Jesus Christ says: Blessed are those who are able to come last.... It is strange. Either Jesus Christ is mad or all of us are mad -- us who run schools, impart knowledge and are teachers.... We are teaching: Blessed are those who are capable of coming first.

The race for coming first cannot liberate anyone. There are some basic reasons for this. The first thing is, one who joins that race remains in conflict and in tension; he has begun to fight. He is creating enmities with others. One who creates enmity cannot remain free from it; he is bound to it. Only he who is a friend to all can become liberated. And only he who is not in competition with anybody can become a friend to all.

What else is the meaning of friendship except, "I am not in competition." What else is the meaning of enmity except, "I am in competition. Either you win or I win. These are the only alternatives: either I or you, but both cannot win."

We are teaching competition. From their very childhood, we add the poison of competition, violence and ambition to the minds of children. And then we assume that these are schools. No, these are anti-schools, centers of anti-learning. These institutions pervert the mind of man and make him insane. Here inferiority is taught, and man then runs through his whole life like a madman. It makes no difference then whether the race is for money, position or power; but we teach a race, the fever of race. Fevers never make one healthy.

I have heard: Once, a dog living in Varanasi thought of going to Delhi. When so many people are running to Delhi, it is not surprising that a dog also should get the idea of going to Delhi. Times have changed. There was a time when people were going from Delhi to Varanasi ; now people from Varanasi want to go to Delhi. The dogs of Varanasi decided to send their representative, their leader to Delhi. They sent a message to the dogs of Delhi to receive him, to make his reservation in the Circuit House there and to tell them that it would take a month for him to reach there by foot. The dog must have been of the Indian mind, traveling like the sages of olden days, always on foot.

The dogs in Delhi were waiting to receive the leader. They were accustomed to receiving leaders anyway; it was their daily routine. And now a leader from their own species was coming, so they had planned a big reception. But it so happened that that dog reached Delhi in seven days. The dogs in Delhi were very surprised. They had seen leaders coming, but never so fast that one reached Delhi in seven days. Reaching Delhi takes a long time; by the time life is about to end people reach there. That is why Delhi becomes their graveyard. But this dog reached there in seven days... smarter than human beings!

He was asked, "How come you reached here in seven days?"

The dog replied, "Don't ask. Our own friends, our own kinfolk have done this! Where the Varanasi dogs saw me off, soon the dogs of the other village ran after me, chasing me. Where they left me alone, at the borders of another village, the dogs of this third village began chasing me. I did not get any time to rest and recoup anywhere, could not stop anywhere. I have come running non-stop to Delhi!" While telling them this, he fell down and died. Whosoever runs non-stop enters death, not life. But the dog completed his journey -- he had the passion to run to Delhi and there were dogs all around to make him run!

We are doing the same thing to our children: "Go to Delhi!" All the people around you go on chasing you; your parents chase you in childhood, and your wife when you are an adult. When you are old, your children are after you, "Go on! Go to Delhi! It is necessary to reach Delhi -- there is no meaning in life without that."

This is the type of fever we create in the minds of children. This fever of ambition is so high that the child runs like mad. This is what we call the speed of life. Can this speed liberate you? No, it can lead you to death but not to liberation. Most of us only die in this process, we don't become liberated. The path of liberation is different.

Only that education will liberate which is free of ambition and which does not create any ambition. But we think that if there is no ambition, how can a man make any progress?

The first important thing to remember is that just getting ahead has no value in itself. Another thing to remember is that there are other ways of making progress: one way is getting ahead of others, the other way is getting ahead of one's own self. I should go further ahead than I was yesterday. This is my competition with my own self, not with others. I should not remain where the last sunset left me; when there is a new sunrise I should surpass myself, transcend my own self.

Such education can liberate. It teaches you the art of transcending your own self. The education which teaches you the art of competition with others can never liberate.

It is important to understand that those who are waiting to leave others behind run all their life, reaching nowhere, because there is always someone or other running ahead who has to be left behind. But if one is busy in transcending one's own self, one day he reaches where nothing remains to be transcended. Mahavira reaches there, Buddha reaches there, Christ and Krishna reach there. There one reaches the supreme state of transcending one's own self. The name of this supreme state is the experience of godhood, the supreme experience, liberation, beyond which there is no further movement or reaching.

Where is that ultimate goal? The name of that ultimate goal is liberation, moksha. When a person transcends himself in every respect, nothing remains to be transcended, then liberation happens. But those who remain busy in getting ahead of others never reach the ultimate point in transcendence. Why? Because "the others" are many. It is neither easy nor possible to be ahead of everyone -- no man has been able to do that so far. There are a few mysteries, because of which nobody has ever been able to do that. Have you heard of anybody who would have claimed that he is first, that nobody is ahead of him? No Napoleon, no Sikandar, no Nehru, can dare to say that there is nobody ahead of him. Nobody can dare to say that.

There was a scientist named Peare who was experimenting on some insects called dung beetles. These insects are wonderful -- they always follow their leader. As long as the leader continues to crawl along, the others also continue to do so; none stop. They too have this human habit. Several types of insects suffer from many of the human diseases -- like following the leader.

Peare took a round plate and put ten or fifteen insects on it. The insects started going round and round it with their leader. The plate was round, so the path was never ending. Until the insect leader stopped, the other insects could not stop -- and when the followers are continuing to crawl after him, how can the leader stop? It will be embarrassing for him. So the leader keeps going, all the other insects keep going. Alexanders and Napoleons carry on, the followers carry on. If the leader stops, the other insects will call him unsuccessful, making it necessary to choose another leader. If the follower insects stop, the leader calls them cowards!

In the end, the insects started dying of exhaustion, one after the other. They could not understand that there was no end to their journey, because the journey was going round and round.

If we look at man carefully, no one has reached to the end of this journey ever. This only shows that our journey is also going on on some circular path, round and round and round. Still there is always someone ahead of us and someone behind us. That time never comes when one is ahead of all, or is behind all -- and thus the journey continues till one tires and dies. Not only those insects of Peare but man too dies because of a similar exhaustion of a circular journey. The other travelers move you out of the way and continue their journey. But no one looks at the fallen ones closely, to see if he is also traveling to a similar end. Up until today, no man has ever been successful in the journey of competition. He will never be. That journey has no end to it -- it goes on in circles.

But there is another journey of transcending one's own self, always rising higher and beyond one's own self. It has no relationship with anyone else. I call education that which does not teach getting ahead of others, but teaches to go ahead of and transcend one's own self. The day a man is initiated in learning to transcend his own self, completely new doors of happiness open before him, hitherto unknown to him. On the other hand, for the man who is initiated in learning to get ahead of others, new ways to misery, tension, pain and restlessness go on appearing in his life.

Remember it well: to force the other behind is to give the other pain. And one who causes pain to others can never attain to bliss, because whatsoever we give to others, that is what comes back to us. Life is wonderful in the sense that we hear the echoes of everything that we give to it.

I had once gone to the hills, to where there was an echo point. Whatsoever noise was created there, it used to echo back and forth seven times. One friend created the sound of a barking dog which multiplied seven times and

came back, causing the hills to echo with the sound of several barking dogs. It was very disturbing. I asked that friend if it would not be better instead to sing a song. If he did not want to sing, he could create the sound of a cuckoo; it is not necessary to bark like a dog. The friend then sang a song which filled the hills all around with the lovely, echoing, song.

I told my friend that the whole of life is like an echo point which returns abuses if abuses are spoken, and returns a song if a song is sung. It returns thorns if thorns are thrown, returns flowers if flowers are showered.

Life is a great center of echoes. Whatsoever we do comes back to us. If we are teaching how to make others unhappy, sad or defeated, it will all come back to us, and it will be the only wealth with us at the end of our life. How can such wealth bring liberation nearer? It will bring only hell, unhappiness, pain and bondage nearer.

It is surprising that if we spread thorns on someone's path, this act is burdensome, but if we spread flowers it is not a burdensome act. Burdensome means, when the thorns return to us they bring misery and pain, but when flowers come back, there is no cause for misery and pain.

Blavatsky traveled all over the world. She had a strange habit: she would carry a handbag in which she kept flower seeds; and wherever she went, whether by train or by car, she was throwing the seeds out on either side. People asked her why she was doing this. She said, "It is time for the rainy season; the water will fall on the seeds and they will sprout and grow into plants. Flowers will come. It will be very beautiful."

People said that even if the flowers blossomed, what did it matter to her? -- she was not going to pass along the same road again. She said, "I see flowers all around which have grown from seeds thrown by others and I am delighted. I owe a debt to those who sowed those seeds. By throwing these seeds I am paying back the debt. I imagine that others who pass by this road some time will be delighted, even though I may not pass here again. Even in my imagination I feel delighted at that happy prospect and I feel overwhelmed."

Have you ever imagined somebody being delighted because of something done by you? Even if you can understand by imagining it that somebody may be delighted because of you, or that somebody's heart may glow because of you, that is enough.

What liberates ultimately is education. What leads a man nearer to his soul, nearer to the truth, is education. And who will help you in this? The other? No, nobody else can do this for you. Each day you have to purify your inner gold in fire and let the impurities burn so only the pure gold remains. One has to rise above one's own self continuously. The education that teaches this process becomes liberating.

I have told you a few things. I will tell you one more thing and complete my talk. Whatsoever misery, darkness, hatred and violence are born in this world of man are due to understanding false knowledge to be knowledge. If we really want to transform the life of man, a clear distinction between false knowledge and real knowledge will have to be made. Whatsoever teaches the means and methods of earning a livelihood is false knowledge. Whatsoever teaches life -- not livelihood but life -- is knowledge.

So we should have false schools as well as real schools. False schools should be those where one can learn methods of earning a livelihood -- because without bread man cannot live. But by bread alone man cannot live either. As it is now, we are calling false schools, real schools. Not only that, we even associate such beautiful people's names with them, such as that of Mahavira. We name a school, "Mahavira Vidyalaya"; Mahavira School. So far there is not a single school on the earth worthy to be named after people like Mahavira. That will take time. Right now all schools are those of ordinary men; not one school of Mahavira is here. But it can be so; if we work, it can be so.

I pray to God, and to you, that some day there can be schools of Mahavira, of Buddha, of Christ -- of those who knew, of those who lived life and attained to Life.

I am grateful to you for having listened to me with love and silence, and I salute the divine residing within you. Accept my salutations.

Revolution in Education

Chapter #6

Chapter title: Fire of Rebellion
12 February 1969 pm in Alembic Colony, Baroda

This discourse was given before teachers under the title: The Birth of New India!

Zarathustra was coming down a hill. He was rushing downwards as if he had heard some very important news from down the hill. He reached the plains, running and panting for breath. He asked the people in the market, "Have you heard the news?"

People asked, "What news?"

Zarathustra said, "Such a big event has happened and you do not know! Did you not know that the God has died?"

People were very puzzled. Zarathustra then felt that perhaps he had come too early, because the news had not yet reached the people.

I was reading this story and I felt no important news ever reaches us. Those who bring such news all feel that they have come before their time, too early.

I would also like to ask you, "Have you have heard that India has died?" Perhaps you will be shocked at this news. You may not have known it. Thousands of years have passed since; perhaps that is why you don't feel it. Perhaps the news is so old and so many events have occurred since, that you do not even remember having heard the news. But I want to tell you that India died long ago.

Iqbal has sung, "There is something about it (India), that its existence does not end." While I was reading this song I felt that first its existence has to have been, to end. If existence has already ended, what remains to be ended? If a man is living, he can die. If a man has intellect, he can be mad. If there is no intellect, man cannot go mad. If a man is healthy, he can fall ill. But if one has no health, how can there be illness?

Could it be that the real reason for the non-ending of India's existence is that it has long before ceased? Now nothing has remained with us to end! I begin my talk with this news.

This country has died thousands of years ago. It is necessary for this country to search for a new life, a new soul. Certainly the teacher could have been of help in the search, but so far he has not been. Up till now the teacher has not proved to be the torch-bearer of our life. Up till now he has remained the agent of the old dead society. The teacher has remained the instrument and the medium for pouring into the mind of the new generation the customs of the old, dead, rotten society of the past.

The teacher can become the medium and the instrument for the birth of a new world, a new life and a new man, but he has not become so far. Let us understand this truth about the teacher first.

Till today what has been the work of a teacher? What work has the society taken from the teacher? Society says that we are taking the work of teaching and educating our children from the teacher. But on looking deeply it is found that the society also takes the work of passing on all the old diseases, blind beliefs and false knowledge into the minds of new generations, through the teacher. The society does not tolerate a teacher who is revolutionary, because the day the teachers become revolutionary a new society will be born. The teachers becoming revolutionaries can become the basic cause for the change of the whole society. That is why an attempt has always been made not to allow the teacher to become a reactionary and retrogressive. He is given a lot of respect, it is true, but society gives that respect to the teacher only while no ray of rebellion is seen in him. If a ray of rebellion is seen in him, the society begins to be strangle his throat.

You may be surprised to know that from the world of teachers, no revolutionary thoughts, no new vision, no new views have ever arisen. The society has always tried to keep the teacher from becoming a revolutionary because it is one of the largest and the most powerful groups of people, and in its hands are the minds and souls of the new generation. If the teacher becomes a revolutionary it will cause a break between the old and the new society, because it is the teacher who hands over the old society into the hands of new society. The teacher is the middle link through which the past enters into the future. The teacher can do a lot, but perhaps he does not even have any such idea as being the forerunner of a revolution.

Up till now the teacher has put all his energies only into adjusting the mind of the new generation to that of the old generations. He has tried to implant the beliefs and attitudes of the old society into the minds of the new generation so that those old ideas reach into the bloodstream of the new generation. The old society respects and honors the teacher just because he is the basis for saving the past. The day the teacher would be rebellious, a new society can be born every day, and the new generation can raise its eyes towards a new life.

But the teacher is not rebellious. In my view, a teacher who is not rebellious is not a teacher at all, and he loses the right to be a teacher. How can a teacher be a teacher who is not rebellious? Without being rebellious, the eyes do not open in the direction of knowledge. Without being rebellious, the soul of man does not come out of its shell. Without being rebellious, one cannot remain in step with life.

Can an education, a knowledge which does not give birth to the independent soul of man ever be called an education, a knowledge? It can be a burden, it can be just information, it can be learning -- but education, never. Education should become the discovery of the soul, but it has not happened like that. The teacher has not yet acquired the attitude of a rebel. That is why the old, rotten society continues to live. What has already died remains alive in some form or the other.

In India this has become the most unfortunate happening of all. India has not even changed its old clothes; the question of changing its soul is very remote. The whole history of India is the history of non-rebelliousness. No revolution has taken place, no transformation has happened. When a society does not pass through revolutions, its life remains no longer a flowing stream but becomes a closed puddle which rots and stinks. It is just full of mud and

stink because of lack of flow. There is a life like a river running towards the unknown ocean, passing through hills and valleys and crossing unknown plains. One life is like that of a river flowing towards the ocean, and there is another life like that of a pond, closed within itself, not moving anywhere.

The life of the Indian society has become like that of a pond, not that of a river. In one way the life of a pond is very secure: nowhere to go, no problems of the road, no straying away on unknown paths; no crossing of the hills, no dreams of the unknown ocean about which there can be no certainty to reach. The life of the pond has its own happiness, having a well-enclosed, carefree, fixed space. India is enjoying the happiness of the pond, not facing the struggle of a river. We have become so accustomed to this happiness that for thousands of years we have stopped taking any risks. Remember, the society which ceases to take risks, will slowly diminish the lighted flame of its life. The inner flame remains powerful only in facing risks.

Nietzsche kept a signboard on his table. Only two words were written on it. Whenever anyone asked him what was the essence of his life, he would point out to that signboard on which was written "Live dangerously." The reality is that it is in living dangerously that life is felt. Living a protected life, one never experiences life. That is why those who live in graves live very safe. There is no danger. The life of a pond is a life of avoiding all dangers, but it stinks, becomes dirty and dries up.

India has been living a secured life for centuries; has created its own cocoon and lives within it. We do not want to enter the expanses of this world and we do not want to travel to the moon and stars. We are bound to our homes. We are more like trees whose roots are bound to the land, than like man. We do not move from our places. Every son takes over his father's place, generation after generation. Repetition continues. Men continue to change, but the society remains the same.

If a man who lived a thousand years ago came to a village in India today, he would not find any difference; everything is the same as it was in his own time. We feel very happy about this, and we say, our leaders say, "Rome has died, the Greece and Egypt of old have died. Where is Assyria and where is Babylon? But we are still here." We respect our static situation greatly. It is not something to be respected, it is very insulting. This staticness clearly tells that we have become incapable of any change. We have lost that capacity for change. We are like a stone lying near a roseflower. The roseflower blossoms in the morning, dances in the light of the sun, tries to rise towards the sky, withers by the evening and falls down. But the stone that was lying nearby in the morning is lying the same in the evening as it was in the morning. The stone must be thinking to itself, "Look! the flower withered away, but I am the same as I was earlier. Many flowers have come and are gone, but I remain." The stone must be admiring itself, but the stone does not know the joy of being a flower. The stone does not know the thrill of change. It does not know that living, flowering, withering and falling to the ground has its own meaning and mystery. The stone does not know that only those wither who flower; only those fall who rise. It also does not know that only those die who live. If you want to avoid dying, avoid living. If you want to avoid falling, never rise up. If you are afraid of withering, do not ever blossom. But what does the poor stone know?

I have heard: One morning in a garden, a strange event happened. There were small grass flowers that had grown, well protected by the protruding stones of a stone wall. Sheltered by the wall, those flowers never knew storms nor the light of the sun. They were living a sheltered life, not knowing the rains, nor the stars that twinkled in the night, but they were very safe, there was no danger for them.

One of the grass flowers lost his head and one day peeped out. He saw a roseflower rising upwards towards the sky. A desire arose in that grass flower, "Can I not be a roseflower? Cannot I rise upwards?" In the night he prayed to God to make him a roseflower. God told him that he should not be mad, that he was so well-protected, that the roseflower blossoms in the morning and withers in the evening and falls, whereas when he blossoms he lives on for weeks on end, he does not wither easily.

The grass flower replied, "That I understood. We stay blossoming because we don't really blossom in the first place. And the grass flower is not so juicy from the very beginning, so we don't wither away easily. No, I want to blossom like a roseflower, I want to have velvety petals like the roseflower. I do not want to live under the shadow of this stone wall, I want to rise up in the open sky -- even for a moment, but I want to rise."

The grass flower was adamant. The neighboring grass flowers also tried to persuade it, saying, "Have you gone mad? Such a thing has never been done in our family and tradition. This is an old custom, we just live here, buried in the stones. Even our forefathers never thought of going out in the open sky, nor did their forefathers. It is not written in our scriptures. What madness! It seems you have gone crazy! You are spoiled by the company of others. Remain within your limits. It is dangerous to step out of this place. You will die. Don't you see how much trouble roseflowers have to endure? The day before there was a storm and all the roseflowers were lying flat on the ground. One day when it was raining, all the rose petals were found weeping. If there are high-speed winds, the rosebush gets shaken to its very roots. We remain safe and happy.

The grass flower, however, did not agree. It said, "No, even for a day, but I want to be a roseflower." And when one does not agree, what can God do? God can do something only when one agrees. If you don't agree, he is helpless. So in the morning the grass flower became the roseflower. Soon the sun rose, the clouds gathered in the sky, and a

strong wind began to blow. All those grass flowers began to shout at the new roseflower from below: "Oh you crazy flower! Now you will die! For a moment's happiness you lost your permanent comfort. Just for a moment, just to be a roseflower, you gave up your safety!"

Soon after, thundering rains came with very strong winds. The thin stems of the roseflower started moving this way and that, and the rose petals began to fall. Even the leaves fell off. After some time the roots of the rosebush, wet and weak, became uprooted and it fell over. While it was dying, a grass flower bent down and said, "You fool! Now have you come to your senses or not? For the sake of a moment's experience under the sky, how much didn't you suffer!"

The dying roseflower replied, "Friends, what I have known during these few moments, I never knew during a long life under the shadow of the stones. Rising for a moment towards the sky, struggling against the storm... maybe for a moment, but to stand facing the sun under an open sky! That struggle with the storm with my delicate branches! A few moments of blossoming -- but really blossoming! The joy I experienced, the juice I felt -- I am full of gratitude to God! And shame on you that you will never know what life is and what it means to struggle and live during a storm! You will live behind your safety wall and die there. Your life is unlived."

I don't know if this really happened or not, but it seems in the life of the people of India this has happened. We are living under the shadow of security. We have become so fond of security that any courage to move in dangers is absolutely destroyed. And then of course, whatever is old feels familiar and safe. Unfamiliar feels unsafe, unknown frightens. Unfamiliar paths create fear in us. So we have made a path and like a drudge we go round and round over it for thousands of years. Our teachers also initiate the new generation into the same old path on which our forefathers used to move.

No, that way the new India cannot take birth. The teachers of India will have to courageously take steps to break this situation and raise the consciousness of the people. Certainly there are dangers in dealing with the unknown, but why be afraid of danger? It is better to face the danger of the unknown rather than be secure with what is known, because in dealing with the unknown there is an interest in life; there arises energy to live and there is a challenge in life.

If the teachers of India decide to free the new generation from moving on the old fixed paths, it is possible for the soul of India to be born -- otherwise not. They should decide to encourage the new generation to take up challenges and cut new paths, climb the mountains and cross the oceans and go into space. But we are in the habit of preventing children even from going into darkness, telling them that the night has come. We prevent them from jumping into the river which is flooded, from jumping into the sea. We say, "Where is the necessity to climb Everest?" Everest is the highest crest of the Indian Himalayas, which since the past one hundred years people from the West have been trying to climb. Many have died in the attempt, and we are laughing at them, sitting secure in our caves. We tell them, "Why do you climb? Are you mad? What is there on top except ice?"

We, however, do not know that the children of those communities that are prevented from climbing the hills, the very soul of those communities is prevented from rising to new heights, and it prevents their souls also from rising.

Thousands of children climb the Alps. Every year during their holidays many of them die in their attempt to climb the Alps. But knowing this full well, their parents and teachers do not stop them, just giving them the statistics of deaths last year. Where there is youth, there will be enterprise and climbing.

Hundreds of boys and girls cross the English Channel, whereas we have lost the courage to cross even a small rivulet. First we try to find how deep it is, whether our forefathers have ever crossed it or not. If our ancestors never crossed it, we are not going to do that because we only follow in their footprints. We cannot take any initiative. Why put our easy life in danger? Our personalities are so fearful that we cling to the corpses. There is no way the new can be born. If we get rid of the old, only then the new is born.

The most important task the teacher has to do is to make India free from its clinging to the old. The teacher should know that he is guilty if he ever tries to create infatuation for the old in children. He has to prepare the children for inviting the new, for being aware of the new, for embracing the new. Prepare the children to be attracted by the unknown and to listen to the call of the unknown.

American children are thinking of living on the moon, but Indian children do not do anything more than watch the drama of "Ramleela." Rama was beautiful and Ramleela is also beautiful, but how long will we continue to watch it? Even Rama would be feeling very much harassed by now as to, "Why are these people after me year after year to enact the same drama?" There will be other Ramas in the future, don't we need to care about that? Many other Ramleelas are going to be played, not only on this earth but on the moon and Mars, and other stars as well.

But for us everything has happened in the past. Nothing is to happen in future -- all our work is over. The god of history has closed the doors and gone ahead. Now there is no more history. Now only one work remains to be done and that is to ruminate over past history. Just as the buffaloes go on ruminating while sitting chewing grass, we also go on ruminating over past history. Don't we have to create anything new, don't we have to give birth to the future, and don't we have to be anything new? Don't we have some dreams in our heart to create a new tomorrow? And

don't we want to create some place where none of our forefathers has even set foot? What is the purpose and meaning of our life if we only have to walk in the footsteps of our forefathers?

We have to decide to walk on the paths where our forefathers never set foot. We will see such visions which our forefathers never saw, we will undertake voyages which have never been undertaken, we will walk on virgin lands where so far nobody has ever walked.

But no, our very aspirations have died. We go on looking for the old trodden paths and continue to walk on them. Hence, in India the new is not taking birth. If the new is not born, life becomes sad. Life has become sad. Every man is sad, tired and defeated. Every man is praying to God for only one thing: to make him free from the chain of rebirth. Somehow one wants to get rid of this life: where is liberation? Every living man goes on asking where is salvation, where is emancipation? We have made life so wretched that except for praying to get rid of it, nothing else seems relevant.

The whole country has become very sad. It is bound to be sad. By staying in the old for long, the mind becomes sad. When a calendar is hanging in our house, we tear off the past date every day. Likewise, every day the old must be discarded so that the new that is hidden behind can appear. In the mind of India, a new date never appears. The calendar is thousands of years old. There are so many old dates in it that the new dates cannot be found, not even with great effort. We have never thrown away the old calendar. We have to do that, so that new dates can be seen.

When we see the birth of the new, our soul dances with joy to welcome the new. A life of dance and cheer spreads all over, because there is great interest in knowing the unknown. The familiar becomes known, no interest remains for it. India has become interestless and hence it has died. Interest is a characteristic of life.

If we want India to revive, the teacher has to do a most important work. Perhaps there is no other more important work than this, and nobody else can do it either. No other section of the society can bring about this revolution. It is the teacher who has to be clear in his mind not to allow new children to be dominated by the old. Before that can happen, sow new seeds in them. Before their mind starts being burdened with the old, make them listen to the music of the new. Before their minds become dulled by old tunes, let the tunes of new songs reach them, so that they are stirred up and engaged in the search for the new.

It is necessary to save the children of India from their parents. It may sound peculiar but it is so. Who will do this? Parents go on casting their children in their own image. Till they complete this job they do not die. When the parents feel that their son has now reached the same development as they had, the parents pass on. Every generation is doing this. The old molds are ready for casting; every new child is being cast into the old molds. Who will prevent this? Who will protect children from their parents? If this is not done, this country cannot take a new birth.

The teacher can save the children from parents. But the teacher is not aware, the teacher is not conscious. He has become the agent of parents, he is working for them. Parents give him a salary so that he can cooperate in molding the children as they like. That is why this has become a vicious circle. How to break it? Someone should take the courage to do it. Difficulties will be there, because the society does not respect such a person, but somebody will have to bear the consequences; otherwise this country cannot take birth.

Excepting the teacher, I do not see anyone else fit for the job. It is wrong to expect this from politicians; it is wrong to expect anything from them. For politicians, if good days arrive, mental treatment will have to be arranged; that much is alright, but nothing else can be expected from them. If the politicians from all the capital cities are arrested and they are sent away for treatment, the world will be different. But it is very unlikely that something can happen through them. Perhaps if people from the planet Mars arrive, something can be done. But there is no hope from our politicians, because they are the agents of all our diseases and they are exploiting our diseases. They have made our weaknesses stepping stones to climb into positions of power. Nothing good is to be expected from them. For them our weaknesses are their ladders, our diseases are their paths, and our ignorance, blind beliefs and foolishnesses are their stepping stones.

Who else can help then? Sadhus and sannyasins? No. Once upon a time they were revolutionaries. That time is gone. Now sadhu-sannyasins are not revolutionaries. Once there was a time there were people like Buddha, Mahavira, Christ and Shankara. Those days are gone. Now sadhu-sannyasins are servants of the society. The society gives them meals and they go on praising the society. Their condition is no better than this. Nothing can be expected of them.

There is only one class of people which has not yet bothered to do anything. That is the educated class of teachers. It is quite a big class and has immense power. Its greatest power is that the new generation is in its hands. Before the new generation changes for the worse, the teachers can give a new direction, new awareness to the new generation. There is a tremendous power in their hands about which they are not aware. If the new principles of transforming life are brought to the minds of the students, the whole country can be transformed within twenty years, because in twenty years the old generation makes way for the new generation to come. The accumulated filth of thousands of years can be removed just within twenty years. But this can only be done by the teacher and no one else.

So first the teacher should become aware that he is committing a crime if he is communicating the old diseases into the new generations. Old generations were afflicted by Hindu-Muslim labels. If a teacher is teaching the children under his guidance that "You are a Hindu," or "You are a Muslim," he is committing a great offence. He must teach the new generation that "You are all human beings, not Muslims and not Hindus." Then a new country will be born. If the old generation teaches that "You are a brahmin," or "You are a sudra," and if the teacher also confirms it, then he is the agent of the old generation. He will then continue the diseases, he cannot stop them.

It is enough to be a human being. If the new generation can understand this, the diseases of thousands of years can be destroyed within twenty years. Nothing can prevent this change. But the teacher is not aware and conscious about what he is doing.

We are infatuated with the old. The children should give up this infatuation with the old. In fact children are not interested in the old, they are very keen to know new things, but we are forcibly making them accept the old. Every day they must be taught the new. Courage, enterprise, risk-taking is the one virtue which, if it is inculcated into the minds of the future generations of India by the teachers -- the work will be over.

But in the structure that is devised so far, the child becomes impotent because he is confused; he does not know what to do. The teacher does not know what to do and what not to do. The people in the society who are supposed to think of the subject also do not know what to do. There is restlessness, but no clear path is visible. It has to be properly thought out, what can be done, what is possible.

I feel that we have a golden opportunity in our hands today, because there is more rebellious spirit in the minds of Indian children than any time before in the history so far. If the teacher can give proper direction to these rebellious children, the old rubbish can be put to the fire. From this energy of rebellion the new can take birth.

But the teacher is unable to understand even the potential of this rebellion that is born in children. He is not able to utilize this potential energy. In fact the teacher himself is afraid of it and he is trying to destroy this rebellion of the children from all sides. He does not know that he is committing a mistake.

The rebellion of the children is not to be destroyed, but it has to be given the right direction. This spirit of rebellion that has come in them, the soul that is born -- which at present is throwing stones, breaking windows and chairs -- this wonderful capacity to destroy that has arisen in them, can be directed to some worthy destruction. If we do not direct this energy properly, their anger will be wasted on destroying the wrong things. Breaking chairs and windows won't help in any way, but this courage to break chairs is welcome. With that courage the Hindu-Muslim fanaticism can be broken, the brahmin-sudra stupidity can be stopped, the foolish walls created between man and woman can be removed. The rotten morality can be exposed and a new, more healthy, more scientific morality can be given birth.

The capacity to break has arrived -- but the teacher is afraid of it. He thinks that this ability to destroy is bad. Furniture is being broken, windows are being broken -- but I say to you that the children do not know what to break, that is why they are breaking chairs. If the teacher explains to them what is to be broken, then they will never break chairs; they will start breaking what needs to be broken. But the teacher is afraid. He says, "Do not break anything. Be disciplined."

However, you do not know that it is a great thing to break discipline. Discipline has a value, indiscipline has a value too. Discipline is valuable to maintain the society as it is. But when the society is to be changed, discipline is of no use, indiscipline becomes valuable. This is the time for change.

Utilize the indiscipline that is there in children. Whatsoever is rotten can be destroyed with the help of these children. What has become a great burden like rock on the life of man should be changed. The teacher can do it because he is very near and intimate to them. But he too is unable to understand the children and does not know what is happening.

It is a good sign that this rebellious spirit is aroused in children. If the teacher can become aware of his revolutionary role and can understand that the burning torch of revolution is in his hands, perhaps these children will love their teacher as they have never loved before. The teacher then will be a collaborator in making a golden future for the children as he never was before.

I have put before the teacher friends these few questions. What I am saying does not necessarily have to be right; it may all be wrong, so it is not necessary for you to believe it. But please think and meditate on whatsoever I have said.

It is necessary to give birth to a dialogue in the whole country, that the teachers begin to think, and they talk to the children, they try to understand them and then come to some decisions. Then I am very hopeful. A lot can be done. The situation is ripe, the opportunity is waiting, the whole climate is there; it is a God given opportunity and it is in our hands to utilize this great energy of transition. Or, would you rather just sit back and watch what is going on and condemn it as bad and not do anything? Would you rather be a spectator? Would you prove to be only a spectator in the life of the coming society? Then every day you will go to school and while you teach the children that two plus two is four, or teach them the ABC's, the politicians will go on preparing atom bombs. While you teach them

arithmetic and the geography of the earth, the politicians will continue the preparations for destroying the very earth itself.

No, this cannot be tolerated any more. Teach that two plus two makes four -- but that is not the only work of a teacher. He should become the creator of a revolution too, then only does he become a teacher. He has to remain awake to everything that is happening around life. He has to be conscious of the new sprouts that have shot forth in children. He also has to be concerned about his own role in life.

India has good teachers, but they are asleep. India has a very intelligent group of teachers, but they are not revolutionary. India has a long line of sincere teachers and teachers full of morality, but their sincerity and morality is retrogressive and reactionary. He is not a revolutionary and that is why he is watching helplessly. He feels there is nothing in his hands; he has only remained an instrument of the society.

In the whole world, India included, the politicians have cut off the teachers from the lifestream. Politicians tell the teachers that they should not worry about the quality of life and about politics; they must do their work within the four walls of the school. The politician is very clever. He knows that if the teacher starts actively thinking about life, he has so much power in his hands that he will transform the whole society. So, cleverly and cunningly he has kept the teacher away from and separate from life as a whole.

The politicians have persuaded the teachers to feel that they are not concerned with life as such, that their great work is to teach the children that two plus two makes four and show them on the map where Timbuktu is, unmindful of whether Timbuktu actually exists! Now the possibility of saving humanity is becoming less and less, and if the teacher continues to watch silently this situation, I am not prepared to call him a teacher. The teacher has a great responsibility. The teacher is a midwife for the new generation.

Socrates has defined the teacher as one who works as a midwife in giving birth to the new soul. Socrates has said it rightly. He was one of the most wonderful teachers of the world. He has rightly said that the teacher has to work just like a midwife and assist in giving birth to a new soul. If you are not becoming, we are not becoming that midwife, we have no right to call ourselves teachers.

I have made a few humble suggestions here. I am grateful for your having heard me so silently and peacefully. Finally, I salute the divine residing within all of you. Accept my salutations.

Revolution in Education

Chapter #7

Chapter title: Total Education

21 January 1968 am in Poddar College

This discourse was given to teachers at Poddar College.

Of the misfortunes that have befallen mankind, the greatest are the ones which we have been regarding as blessings. Because of regarding them as benedictions, as blessings, it has not been possible to avoid those misfortunes, or to change them, and nothing has been done to be free of them; rather, on the contrary, we have been watering them at their roots. As a result, born out of this is the man who is in front of us, and created out of it is the society which is all around us.

What has been going on in the name of education I consider the greatest of all those misfortunes. Certainly you will be surprised to hear this, because education is thought to be a blessing. But are you aware that education has not given man balance and health? On the contrary, it has taken away all the balance from human life. And it was bound to be so, because there are some basic mistakes in what we have so far been thinking education to be.

The first basic mistake is that we have taken man to be only intellect. There can be nothing more false and wrong than this. Man is not intellect alone and the education being given is only of the intellect. The rest of the man remains untouched and incomplete; the rest of the man remains undeveloped, only the intellect develops. It is just as if someone's whole body shrinks and wastes, only his head goes on becoming bigger. That man will be only an ugliness, and that man will be unable to walk. It will be difficult for him to live, because his big head will not be in balance with the rest of his body. And this is exactly what has happened in the name of education.

We decided that man is only intellect, and then for the past three thousand years we have been doing everything only to develop man's intellect. The intellect has developed but the rest of the man is left far behind; the rest of the man is left three thousand years behind, and his intellect has gone three thousand years ahead. The tension, the gap that is created between the two is what is killing us. This has given birth to an inverted crippledness.

A man has all parts of his body intact and only his eyes are missing; then we say one part of his body is crippled, undeveloped. If a man has all his parts but his two legs, we call him crippled. An opposite type of crippledness is also possible of which we are not aware -- a man having only two legs and nothing else. This man is an inverted cripple.

Education has not made man healthy, it has crippled him. Only his intellect has developed and all the remaining parts of his body have remained undeveloped. The intellect has become bigger and bigger, and his connection with all the sources of life have been cut off.

What do we teach? What do we give in the name of education? Do we offer any education of life? Do we give any education in living? Do we teach the art of life? Not at all. We teach some words; we teach some mathematics, some language, some chemistry or physics, some history or geography. But what do we really teach through all this teaching? Just some words.

Words are not life. Words have their utility in living life, but mere education of words is not the education of life. Then what happens is that there is a great pile of words.... An educated man ends up having no other wealth than that of words. He is as idiotic as any uneducated person. There is only one difference between them, and that is that in addition the educated man falls into the illusion that he is not an idiot. He remains just as ignorant about all other dimensions of life as any tribal man from the jungles. He has no understanding whatsoever about the art of living, he has no idea of the paths along which to live life. He has no acquaintance with life at all. What do libraries and books have to do with life? There is no need to commit the mistake of thinking that one who is familiar with a classroom is familiar with life. And it is necessary to keep in mind that life may not even give a clay medal to one who has won a gold medal in the university.

The education of words, mere accumulation of words, mere wealth of words, certainly becomes a weight on the brain but neither does it make the brain free, nor alive, nor thoughtful, nor does it provide any originality in looking at life, nor does it give the art of living or teach ways of living. So far, this is what we have been calling education! The sick, insane and ill man we see today is the result of this education.

Do you know that as his education grows, man goes on becoming more perverted? The uneducated man had a kind of balance and health which is missing in the educated man. The aboriginals of the forests had a kind of beauty, a kind of music, a bliss. There was a meaning and purpose in their life which is missing in the educated man.

It is really amazing. Are we becoming educated at the cost of losing bliss? Is our capability and fitness to experience bliss declining? Are we breaking contact with the roots of our life? If we look at the educated man with unbiased eyes -- which is difficult because we are also educated men, so it is with great difficulty that we are able to see an educated man's diseases. Where there is the same disease prevalent all over the place, it is very difficult to recognize it.

We are all educated, not only educated but we are also the educators; we are the people who spread and impart that same education. It will be very difficult for us to see... very difficult for us to think that what we are spreading is not making man healthy. But those who have eyes and those who have not lost their entire intelligence in going through this education -- those people may be able to see a few things.

America is the most educated country, but the largest number of mad people is also in America. Is there some relationship between the two, or is it just accidental? The countries which are becoming more and more educated, the mental tension of their people is growing in the same proportions. Are we aware of these statistics or not? The more educated a country becomes, the more cases of suicide it has. In America itself, every day some 1.5 to 3 million people seek treatment for mental ailments. These are government statistics, and we know well that government statistics are never correct. If 1.5 to 3 million people are seeking mental treatment every day, then we know that it is not because of some individual difficulty, rather some collective disease is entering man's mind.

In New York thirty percent of people cannot sleep at night without taking sleeping pills. And the scientific investigations and researches there say that within fifty years not a single man there will be able to sleep without taking sleeping pills. Are these the symptoms of a progressing man? And what to say about New York -- even Bombay will not stay behind for too long. We are also standing shoulder to shoulder in this progress, in this race; India will not stay behind. India, which has been the world teacher in every field, will not stop before becoming the world teacher in madness as well. We cannot avoid it; we are moving fast in this direction. Our leaders are making every effort so that we are not left behind.

The black shadow of mental tension and restlessness that has descended on the West -- what is the reason for its birth? The people who have tried to make the West educated during the past three hundred years, they are the good people with good intentions whose hands are behind it. Perhaps they did not know about the total nature of life; perhaps they had the notion that man will become happy if his intellect alone can be developed. Certainly intellectuality should grow, intellect should grow, but in proportion to all the limbs of life, in a balance. It should grow hand in hand with health, with heart, with being. If it grows alone, it is bound to create danger.

Intellect has no heart. The life, the world created by intellect will also be heartless. Intellect has mathematics, not love. Intellect has calculations and statistics, not feelings. Intellect thinks in terms of figures and logic -- life reaches beyond logic and figures and mathematics.

Life is very mysterious; no mathematics is able to explain it. No figures, no statistics are able to solve life. But intellect does not accept the existence of any mystery; intellect thinks everything is simple and straight like two plus two making four. It is this non-mysterious, heartless approach of intellect towards life which has given life a mechanicalness. Every day man goes on becoming more and more machine-like. But when a man becomes like a machine, we call him efficient, skilled.

A machine is always more efficient than man. And if our emphasis remains only on the efficiency of the man, one day man will become efficient like machines but will have lost his soul. Man commits mistakes, machines don't. We are trying for a man who does not commit mistakes, who is absolutely efficient, who moves on the unfaltering lines of mathematics.

Moving on the unfaltering lines of mathematics is like a train running on the railway tracks. But the rivers of life do not run on tracks, they run on unknown, unfamiliar paths. The river of life has a freedom which cannot be contained in the fixed structures of intellect -- but this is what we have been trying to do till today.

So the first thing I want to say to you is that education of only intellect is not intelligent and wise. There are other aspects of life too, and they are more significant than the intellect, because man does not live by intellect. The sources of man's living are much deeper than the intellect. Neither do we love through intellect, nor do we get angry through intellect, nor do we hate through intellect. Neither do we recognize beauty through intellect, nor do we read song and poetry through intellect, nor are any deeper experiences of life attained through intellect. It is not surprising if the education of mere intellect deprives and cuts life off from all the deeper experiences. But we have been imparting an education only of intellect.

This education has given birth to a very unbalanced man. This unbalanced man goes on doing just anything; just anything is happening through him, any trouble. And these troubles are absolutely bound to happen, because when a man becomes unbalanced from within, his outside behavior also becomes unbalanced. Then there is no movement, no clear goal, no music, no rhythm in his life. This is the first of our misfortunes -- that we have understood education as the education of mere intellect -- not of a total life. The education of a total life will have other meanings.

In my vision, too much weight of intellect completely stops a few things from growing within man. We start sending five-year-olds to school. Their intellect comes under such a load that their bodies, their hearts, their feelings -- all capacities in their life for deriving bliss and enjoyment -- get destroyed. All juices of life are taken away by the intellect and the rest of the life dries up.

These children grow up heartless, without feeling, empty of any love, machine-like. Their value is only one: how much higher position they can reach, how much salary they bring back home, how efficiently they work. Is man born for this? Is man born only for this, that he gets a bigger salary or sits on a higher chair? Or does man come in life to search for some other wealth of bliss? But in order to search for that wealth, it is necessary to develop some other things.

In my view -- it will appear very strange to you when I say this today -- until the whole of mankind comes to this decision, if not today then tomorrow, that there should be no weight on the child's intellect up to the age of twelve or fourteen years of age.... The weight on the child's intellect should come only after fourteen years of age. Up to fourteen years of age, all efforts should be made for the growth of the child's body and feelings.

The first fourteen years in the child's life are the most formative years. As the child attains sexual maturity, only after that is the right development of his intellect easy and appropriate. Before that, there are other precious parts of his life which should develop. The child's health should develop, the child's feelings should develop, the child's capacity to love should develop, because the child whose capacity to love does not grow in childhood, even if he grows to old age there will not be any growth of love in him.

Childhood is the most pleasant and amazing opportunity for love to grow in children. But we waste and destroy that time in teaching them mathematics and teaching them geography and the foolishnesses of history. What is the purpose of it all? If the child does not know much of geography, there is no great harm in it, and if the child does not learn the names of mad people like Akbar and Napoleon and Alexander, it makes no difference at all. If the child does not learn the statistics of which people have killed how many people, that makes no difference. And to teach them the nonsense of which emperor was born in what year and died in what year -- neither is there any meaning nor any significance in it. But all those moments in the child's life which were for developing love get wasted in teaching him all these stupidities.

Are you aware that all your love after childhood becomes false and empty and deceptive? There is a basic difference between the love you felt for someone in your childhood and the love you felt for someone when you had become adult. That sacredness of childhood love, once it is lost -- if that innocence is once lost -- to regain it in life becomes very arduous almost impossible.

The whole capacity of childhood should be devoted to the development of love, not to the development of intellect, because the palace of life that is erected on the foundations of childhood love, only that can attain to bliss. Bliss has no relationship whatsoever with intellect. But we put intellect in the very foundation, then the building that

arises is not a temple but a factory. If man's life is to be made into a factory, the building should arise on the foundation of intellect. And if man's life is to be made into a temple, the foundations should be laid in love.

All of childhood should be given to the development of the heart, all efforts should be made for the development of the heart. And for the development of the heart quite different opportunities are to be sought, not the opportunities we seek in the schools and colleges. For the development of the heart it is necessary that the child be under the open sky, near the trees, under the shelter of the moon and stars, at the river banks and sea shores, in contact with the soil, the earth. The closer the child to the vast, the more love will grow in him, and the sense and meaning of beauty will develop.

The crime that is being done against small children sitting within closed walls in front of blackboards -- the sin that is happening this way, someday, if not today then tomorrow, mankind will take account of it and we all will be declared guilty.

Before they have hardly gathered any consciousness, in the name of education we imprison children within closed rooms and walls, in prisons. And what do we teach them there? What values of life do we teach them there? Then the wonderful moments of childhood, when the contact with life could have been established, are lost.

Rabindranath has written, "I was being imprisoned in the schools. The birds would be singing songs outside and I had to go on looking at the blackboard. The sounds of the birds would be wonderful, but I had to listen just to the monotonous voice of the teacher and learn geography. If my ears and my being reached out to the birds, I had to undergo punishment."

Then, when Rabindranath started his school for the first time in Shantiniketan, who would give their children to him to spoil? Rabindranath himself could not get any degree in any university. Fortunate was he; otherwise the world would have been deprived of a great poet. Blessed was he that his parents could not succeed and took him out of the school. Had his parents been successful the world would have suffered a great loss. And how many losses this world has suffered throughout the history of man cannot be assessed because there is no way to know how many Rabindranaths would have been lost in the schools.

When Rabindranath opened his school for the first time, who would send his children there to be spoiled? If I open a school, would you send your children? No, you would not. Who would send their children to be spoiled? But still there were some such children of Rabindranath's friends whom it was not possible to spoil anymore -- they were sent to Rabindranath's school. They were at the extreme border, now there was no hope for them to be spoiled any further. Ramanand Chatterji, the editor of MODERN REVIEW, had also sent his son; he was fed up with him.

Any children who have even a little intelligence, parents certainly get troubled with them. Parents like non-intelligent, idiotic children, without any genius, very much, because they sit down wherever they ask them to sit down, and stand up when they ask them to stand up. They neither have any soul of their own, nor any being of their own.

So Ramanand also had sent his son. After three months Ramanand went to see what the condition was there, how the school was run. He had no hopes that the school would be running, but what he saw there amazed him even more. Rabindranath was sitting under a big tree, some ten to fifteen children sitting around him, and study was going on. Coming closer Ramanand discovered that ten to fifteen were sitting under the tree, and ten to fifteen were sitting up in the tree. What kind of class was this?

To Rabindranath he said, "I had my doubts in the very beginning! What is going on? Is this a class? I feel sad to see this -- the boys sitting up in the tree."

Rabindranath said, "I also feel sad: the fruits have ripened, and I am amazed at the children who are sitting under the tree! I also feel sad. I have become old; otherwise I also would have been in the top of the tree. The fruits have ripened, the winds have brought the fragrance of the fruits, the tree is calling, and if children don't climb it, who else will? The tree has sent the invitation -- these children who are sitting under the tree have already become old. They are not receiving the invitation; the message is not reaching their nostrils that the fruits have ripened. The tree is giving the call to come! Sad will be those who have become old and unable to climb, but these children have not yet grown old! This is what I was thinking, sitting here. Have these children already become old? Have they not felt the challenge of the tree? Have they not received the message?"

We make the children old in their very childhood. And then if the youth, the freshness disappears from life, who is responsible? As I see it, too much misconduct is happening, too much oppression is happening. Much wrong is happening.

The moments of childhood are so wondrous that they will never again come back into life. The matters of mathematics and accounts can be taken care of later on -- the whole of life is lying ahead -- but some precious matters of life can be passed on only in the childhood, which can never be passed on later.

The children who do not become close to nature, those children will not be able to become close to God either -- this we must understand -- because nature is the door to God. Those who have not experienced in the childhood the one who is present there -- that presence of God there, under the sky, in the sun, on the sands of the ocean, near the trees -- will worship in the temples until their old age, will bow down in front of the stone statues, will learn the GITA,

the KORAN and THE BIBLE by heart; but they can have no connection with God whatsoever. They have already missed the very door, they have already wandered off the very path.

The first necessary thing to know about right education is that we should be able to provide children closeness to nature, not bringing them close to the man-made houses but to all that is created by the energy of life, because it is through this that they will be able to come close to God; it is through this that they will be able to come to love; it is through this that they will be able to understand the secrets of prayer and then their life will arise out of that.... Love should come to them first, mathematics later, because no mathematics can deceive a man who has learnt love.

Somebody asked Saint Augustine, "What shall we do that no evil is done by us?"

Saint Augustine said, "Do not ask this. I know only one thing, that if you know love, then whatever you will do it cannot be evil."

Augustine said not to bother about how not to do evil; that is not the question. If there is no love within you, then whatever you do will be evil; and if there is love within you, then whatever you do it cannot be evil.

But what education of love, what initiation in love have we given? What certificates of love have we conferred? And then if in three thousand years man has become completely loveless, murderous and violent, who is responsible for it? None other than our education can be held responsible for it.

But the teachers need not feel offended by this, because putting this responsibility on education means I am giving lots of honor to education; I am saying education is the center of life. Hence the teacher should be ready to bear the main responsibility; tomorrow the main honor too can be his. Tomorrow, if life is transformed, it is education which will receive the honor. And today if life has become polluted and poisoned, then the educationist should be prepared to accept the main charge and responsibility also. This is indicative of education being central. What I am saying is very respectful -- that education is central. Neither the politicians nor the religious leaders are as responsible as the teacher is.

But the coming world will also only bestow honor on the teacher if he is able to lay down some basis for changing life. If you are not able to change it, tomorrow, children themselves will start changing it.

A friend of mine has just returned from a trip to Holland and Belgium. He told me that the high-school boys and girls there have started refusing to study any further. They have big youth centers, they have big unions, and what they say is, What will come out of studying any further? They ask their parents, "You are very educated and what has happened in your lives? So why unnecessarily force us through the same machine, passing through which you have not attained anything?" And parents have no answer for it.

If your children also ask you what you have attained by being educated, what answer have you got? Will you show them your coffers? Will you show them your big houses? Will you show them your chairs you have obtained in Delhi? What will you show to the children? Do you have anything you have attained by being educated? Can you say with great certainty, "My self-confidence is great"? Can you say with great certainty, "My gratitude towards life has grown"? Can you say, "I have become blessed"? You cannot.

So children are going to ask you, if not today then tomorrow, and if you don't have the answer, I must tell you children are going to refuse to go to your factories of education. They have already started refusing in highly educated countries, and their refusal is right. But before they refuse, can't we change our whole way of thinking about life?

Up to the age of sexual maturity, until the child has ripened from the point of view of sex -- be it a boy or a girl -- till then the central education of the child's life should be of love and heart -- because later the whole of life will come out of that. The child will become a wife or a husband, the child will become a mother or a father -- all the emotional relationships of their lives then will be the relationships of love and heart, not of mathematics or geography or history.

No mother can become a better mother because of studying history; nor can a father become a better father by studying geography. Something else is needed that can give birth to a better mother, a better father; something else is needed that can give birth to a better wife, a better husband. Today, neither are there mothers in the world nor fathers, neither wives nor husbands: there are pseudo-relationships in these names. Have you ever looked at the person you call your wife? It is possible that you may have loved someone you don't call your wife, but never the person you call your wife.

The person a wife calls husband -- has she ever loved him, respected him? Has her being ever loved him, prayed for him? Has she ever taken any step to make his life rich and musical? Not at all. Rather, his wife scatters as many thorns for him as possible, or creates as many obstacles as possible. And the husbands also do the same, parents also do the same. They say that they love their children; but we have not known love -- how will we love children?

If we were loving our children, there could not have been so many wars in the world. Who is the parent who will send his children to war? If we were loving our children the world could not have become so ugly. If we were loving our children, I go as far as to say, we would not have given birth to children... because which loving parent will be ready to give birth to their children in this ugly and dirty world? They will excuse themselves, saying, "How to bring our children into such a world? Tomorrow, when we face them, we will feel so ashamed in front of them that we gave

birth to them in this world. How to send them out into this ugly world full of immorality and darkness?" Parents would have refused to give birth to children if they had love in their hearts.

But no, they go on giving birth to children. They have no concern at all for the children. They go on raising their children; they go on raising their children as the fodder for the guns and the cannons. They go on getting their children butchered in the cause of everchanging names and new tricks -- in the name of India, in the name of Pakistan, in the name of China, in the name of communism, in the name of democracy. Parents are ever ready to get their children murdered in the name of any big slogan. These names and slogans are too big for them -- the children are too small!

If in this world there was love in the hearts of parents for their children, a different world would have been born in which there could be no wars -- because every child is some mother's child, some father's son. Who would have agreed to send their children to war? We would have said, "Let Pakistan perish, let India perish, but the children cannot go to war! Whether China is saved or not, whether Russia is saved or not, whether America remains or not, no mother is ready to send her son to war. The wars would have vanished from the world, as well as politics, politicians and nations. But nobody loves their sons, we simply do not know love. We simply have no acquaintance with love. We simply have not come across love. The moments that could have been the moments of meeting with love we have wasted in learning numerous useless things.

So in my view, the foundation of education should be love, not intellect. Intellect is only a means. If there is love within, then the intellect becomes just a means to spread and develop love. And if there is no love within, then the intellect becomes a means for spreading lovelessness.

Truman gave the order to drop the atom bomb on Hiroshima. Next morning, I have heard, the journalists surrounded Truman and asked, "Could you sleep peacefully last night?"

Truman said, "Very peacefully. As I heard that Hiroshima and Nagasaki had been turned into ashes, and that Japan would surrender, immediately I went to sleep peacefully for the first time."

None of those journalists even asked, "One hundred and twenty thousand people have been killed and you could sleep peacefully? Are you a human being or something else?" But that man's name is: True man, the real man!

Our education is giving birth to just such true men, in whom there is no humanness, in whom there is no energy for life, no compassion; who have no waterfall of love. Those who have no waterfalls of love can be computers; they can be machines for calculations, not human beings. The first symptom of a human being is the love in him. The greater the love, the greater the man. The greater the love, the greater that man's closeness to God.

Therefore I want to say only one basic thing: The first steps of education need to be the steps of love. And in order to take the steps in love closed walls are not needed but the open sky, birds, trees and stars and the moon. The basic education should not be of geography but of beauty. Basic education should not be of science but of art. Basic education should not be of tension but of relaxation and peace.

If we can arrange the education of children up to fourteen years of age this way, then later on it is difficult to spoil these children, then they can be sent to any school or any university whatsoever. Then they can be taught anything, there will be no danger from it in any way. If a sword is put in the hands of these people, there will be no harm from that sword. If an atom bomb is given to them, there will be no harm done through it. Then even the greatest of power in the hands of love becomes creative.

Science has discovered the greatest power for man, but education has not been able to give him a loving heart. Great power is dangerous in the hands of those who have no love.

Nadirshah was coming towards India. He asked an astrologer if to sleep too much was very bad: "I sleep too much. Is it really a bad thing to sleep for too long?"

The astrologer said, "No, if people like you sleep twenty-four hours a day it is much better. If bad people fall asleep forever, it is better. Good people's waking is good and bad people's sleeping is good."

It is said that Nadirshah had that man beheaded. But he had said a very true thing. It has remained an old custom to behead truth-sayers. He had said the right thing: it is good if the bad man sleeps, and it is good if the good man is awake.

Similarly, I say, a loving man being powerful is good; a loveless man being impotent, powerless, is good. If power is in the hands of loving persons, then life grows; and if power is in the hands of a loveless person, then life will become only a graveyard and nothing else -- and this is what we have been doing. It is necessary to contemplate on this.

I have come to request and urge the teachers only this -- that they think; that they think about how the heart can be developed. And if it is necessary -- and it feels to me this way -- if for a hundred years all the colleges and universities of the world are closed down and man's mind is left completely uneducated, then too there will be no harm compared to the harm that is going to happen in continuing the current education for the coming hundred years.

Man was uneducated for thousands of years. Those people, those uneducated people also have known bliss, known song, known love. They too created a world. In their lives there was also happiness and smiles -- more than in us, much more than in us. We have lost everything.

It is necessary to bring back man's naturalness.

I do not say that education should be abolished, I am saying that the foundation of education should be changed. And if only this education is to continue, if there is no other alternative, if this education is the only alternative, then I say let this whole education be stopped and man go back to the jungles. Then too we will not lose anything.

But I feel there is an alternative. Education can be made total. And if only one thing gets added to it: if its foundations become that of love, of feeling, of heart, of compassion and kindness, if we develop man's heart first and then his intellect, if the heart leads and the intellect becomes its follower, then this education can become the right education.

I have not lost hope. If I had lost hope I would not say these things to you. I say these things to the teachers in the hope that they will think. There is a great power in their hands. Today or tomorrow the world will hold them responsible if something goes wrong. It is appropriate to reflect before that happens.

If I come back again among you, I will be able to talk to you about how to impart the education of love. Today, if only your attention can be drawn to it, if only this much attention can be drawn to the fact that the house of education based on the foundations of intellect can make a factory but not a temple, I will consider my talk complete. If the temple of life is to be created, the foundation will have to be laid upon love.

Childhood -- the period up to fourteen years of age -- is a wonderful opportunity for the growth of love. If we miss at that time, we miss it forever. Then there remains no way that we can bring about any change in it. And to bring about a change during the childhood, nothing is needed to be done -- the streams of love were eager to flow. We knowingly stopped them, we did not allow them to flow. If we can only become an opportunity for their streams of love to flow, we will be able to give birth to a totally new kind of man. And a new man is absolutely needed.

Neither making more and new hydrogen and atom bombs is needed as much, nor is it needed as much that we build sputniks and spaceships to reach to the stars and the moon, nor is it needed as much that we measure the depths of the oceans, nor is it needed as much that we build very big factories, bridges and highways. All these will be useless if man goes wrong. They will all be useless.

At this time, there is only one urgent issue and that is: How do we create the right man? Man is wrong: how to create the right man? Think in this direction.

I said these few things to you, you listened to me with such love and silence -- I am very grateful. Finally, I offer my salutations to the god residing within all of you, but which you are unaware of. Please accept my salutations.

Revolution in Education

Chapter #8

Chapter title: The Light of Disbelief

14 August 1969 pm

This discourse was given to students.

Just as an individual becomes old, the society also becomes old. Just as an individual dies, the society dies and civilizations also die, but no individual can refuse to become old or refuse to die. But a society, a civilization, can refuse to become old and to die if it so desires, although the society which refuses to die will cease to have a new life. It is easy to refuse to die, but if a new life is not available a sort of dead life begins.

The civilization of this country has long since ceased to have a new birth. We are as we have been for thousands of years. Even if there are a few changes, they have come from outside; changes have not happened from within ourselves. If we have progressed it is due to our being pushed by others, not to our own inner push. We have moved ahead out of compulsion, but our soul is shackled to our past.

Our society is as good as dead. Since ages sprouts of new life have ceased to grow. But we are neither unhappy nor anxious because of this; indeed we feel happy and fortunate because of it. We go on continuously claiming that there are no scriptures older than ours, that no temples are older than ours. We never feel concerned for the fact that all this fuss about our being ancient is the proof of our having ceased to have a new life.

Those who are capable of being new let the old disappear; those who are unable to have a new life go on praising the old and go on telling old stories. They go on carrying old names and old scriptures in their heads. But this is all dead weight and results in destroying the soul and dignity of the country. Therefore there is no sadder community than ours on this earth. Our sadness is like that of some old ruined society; our mind has been like some old building, old and dilapidated, full of layers of dust and rubbish.

Where the streams of life cease to flow, the life becomes sad, stinks and becomes dirty. If we dam the flow of a river, the water will become dirty and stinking. It is not only that the streets of our town are full of filth and dirt, but the condition of the whole country has become like those streets. The streets of the town look dirty, but the streets of the mind cannot even be seen. A day may come when we shall clean the streets -- if not today then tomorrow -- but since the streets of the mind cannot be seen, who can clean them? The outer roads may soon become clean, but the inner roads will remain dirty. Just by the outer roads becoming clean, nothing of the inner can change. In our country many new things are coming and we are becoming modern. New children are being born daily, but our mind continues to remain old. It is thousands of years old, not just ordinarily old.

If we study the rules and regulations of our society, we will find that we have not made any progress since Manu Maharaj. Manu happened about three thousand five hundred years ago, and the Shudra that was given birth by Manu is still living. Even today the talk of making a Shudra free of his stigma is considered revolutionary. If the talk of removing the stigma of a Shudra is still considered revolutionary, it means that the Shudra is still very strong and very much feared by the higher castes. How can a rule made by somebody three and a half thousand years ago, continue to live, and cannot be removed?

It is not known at what point of time in our history we decided that a man lives according to his fate. Man has changed the whole world, including those things that were considered predestined; the longevity of man is increased, the fatal diseases have been cured, many other things have been changed -- but India continues to live according to its fate. Our attitude towards destiny has not changed. Even today we can see a student studying in a university, showing the lines of his palm to an astrologer sitting on the footpath, and paying twenty - five paise! What will happen to this country if a university student still shows the lines of his palm...? Sometimes he denies this fatalism, but at the time of his examination he can be found standing in front of the Hanuman Temple with folded hands.

Our mind is very old. Our exterior is becoming new. Our mode of clothing has become as new as it is anywhere in the whole world, but our inner being is old. Our equipment has become new -- not because of us, but because of the pulls and pushes of others, unavoidably, out of compulsion. But in the inner life, where there can be no pushes from the outside, where nobody is persuading us, we continue to remain old.

I was staying in Calcutta with a doctor who had passed his F.R.C.S. examination in England. He was very famous in Calcutta. One evening, when he was taking me to a meeting and when we had come out under the porch of the building, his daughter sneezed. The doctor asked me to stop awhile because of this sneezing: it is considered a bad omen.

I asked, "What relationship could there be between my going out and her sneezing? Why should the sneezing prevent me from going?"

He said he knew the causes of sneezing, but still where was the harm in waiting for a minute or two?

I said it was not a question of my waiting due to her sneezing, but that the belief in this superstition stops the whole country's soul from beginning some work. This belief is dangerous. Waiting for a minute or even for an hour is not the question; the question is of our thinking and believing in such a superstition in the twentieth century. When a doctor believes it, it becomes highly objectionable.

But our ways of thinking have become so rigid that we do not change. In fact we have ceased to think - for thousands of years we have been taught not to think. A person who thinks is not considered good, because he is creating a spirit of rebellion. Those who do not think are like sheep rather than men, following one after the other: the only reason for their walking is that the one in front of them is walking. The whole crowd is continuing to walk that way.

If some Indian begins to think and asks, "Why are you walking like this?" the reply will be, "My father also walked like this." This is not only our humiliation, but it is the humiliation of our forefathers also. Even if we regress for a thousand years the reply will be the same. Because this was being done then we are continuing to do like this.

Now people know how rain happens. Rain has never come as a result of doing religious sacrifices, nor can it ever come, but we are still trying to get rain through religious sacrifices! The whole world knows that if water is not coming from the tap, no religious sacrifice can bring it. How much more difficult to get rain from the sky. If well water has dried up, it is not possible to get water in the well through a religious sacrifice. The sky is far away -- how can we make it rain? But people in India are still trying to get rain from the sky through religious practices! However, through scientific means there are countries who get rain from the clouds and who can drive away the clouds if they do not want the rain.

But we can do such things only if our old ideas can be removed. We think it is only necessary to do incantations in the presence of the holy fire; we think only by throwing rice, wheat, ghee etc in the fire -- things which are in short

supply -- more such things can be had. This has never been possible. Otherwise, we have done so many religious sacrifices that India should have been the richest society in the world. We have not heard that America ever did any religious sacrifices, but a lot of wealth rained from the sky there. Perhaps in Russia, they would send such believers in sacrifices to mental hospitals. And we? we go on doing such sacrifices since the last five thousand years, but nobody is ready to question our madness. If now the government of Gujarat does not allow such sacrifices, destroying grains, it is not because the government believes that the sacrifices are wrong or sinful or irreligious, but because the government does not have enough wheat to fulfill the commitments of rationing. The government does not allow burning wheat in the sacrificial fire just because of the commitments of rationing. The government should say that even if we do have enough wheat, we will not allow such sacrifices. But that much courage the government does not have; therefore they say, "We do not have enough wheat to fulfill the rationing commitments."

But the people doing such sacrifices are clever. They say, "We will do sacrifices without wheat - but sacrifices cannot stop. We will do incantations and put something else in the fire instead, but sacrifices will continue." Those who are against such sacrifices do not give convincing arguments; they do not challenge them to justify such things in a laboratory. How can world peace be achieved through such religious sacrifices? One person is restless: can he attain peace through a sacrifice? Go to a mental hospital: prove that a madman can be cured through a sacrifice. Where the whole world has become crazy, can it become peaceful by your sacrifices? Nothing is clear. The greatest damage is not done because of wastage of wheat; as long as we remain involved in the wrong remedies, right solutions cannot be found.

If people believe that by tying an amulet diseases can be cured, medical science cannot be developed. The damage is not caused by the amulet as such -- maybe one man may die or ten men may die -- but the greatest damage will be the nondevelopment of medical science. Medical science can be developed if we really look for the causes of the disease -- from where and why the disease arises. We can develop medical science through scientific means, not by asking an exorcist or a charmer or a scholar of scriptures. To cure the disease, we must know the causes of the disease and destroy those causes.

In America, Sweden, Switzerland, and other first world countries, the percentage of killer diseases has been reduced so much that one can say that man was never so healthy before. The longevity has increased. In Russia during the 1917 revolution, the average age of a Russian was twenty-three years! We can say that after every year they added one more year to their life. In Sweden and Switzerland the average life expectancy is eighty-two years. The scientists and thinkers there say that if we wish there is not much difficulty in giving man an average life span of one hundred years. When that one hundred years becomes the average, you can find an old man aged two hundred and fifty years. In our country, where the average age is only thirty years, we can find an old man of ninety years -- three times the average -- so it should be easy to find an old man of three hundred years if the average age rises up to one hundred. At this time in Russia there are over one thousand people who are a hundred and fifty years old.

The whole world is changing everything, but in India the traditional structures are decisive. We go on saying that we are short of wheat and clothes and we say it in such a way that we look helpless. We are starving and naked since the last five thousand years -- but our way of living is such that we may continue to remain so for a further five thousand years. In this the fault is not that of our land or the sky, but of our wrong way of thinking.

In 1940, Russia burnt wheat instead of coal in their trains, because they found that coal was more valuable than wheat. Wheat can be grown every year, but for coal to form in mines takes lakhs of years. Therefore coal must be burnt economically. Now in this world, in one country people burn wheat in their train engines and in another country people do not have enough wheat for their bellies! In such a situation, one is forced to wonder what is the matter.

... And it is not the case that America was rich from the beginning; the wealth has been created there during the last fifty or sixty years. Otherwise they were as poor as we are. And remember, in America, the American Indians, the natives, are still poor. The richness is not just due to the land in America.

One German thinker, Count Keyserling, returned after visiting India. In his book he has made a strange observation. When I was reading it I was surprised. He has written that India is a rich country where poor people live! I was thinking, "How can this be? If the country is rich, how can the people remain poor, and if the people are poor, how can the country be called rich?." Then I realized that he was just being ironical. He was just trying to say that the people can become rich, but the intelligence, the mind and the thinking of the people living there is for remaining poor. They cannot become rich. If this country can get people like the Americans to live here, this country will become richer than America. We have everything, except the thinking mind. Our habits for thousands of years have been not of thinking, but of avoiding thinking. When it is a question of thinking, we would rather avoid thinking! If we have a problem we will go straight to the temple, but will not think of a solution for a problem.

Recently I was in Bihar. Thousands of famines have happened in Bihar since the time of Buddha, but the people of Bihar have done nothing. There is a lot of water underground in Bihar, but they do not dig wells. Every year they are waiting for the famine and begging for help to go on living. They do nothing! When the famine comes, they accept

it and beg. When there is famine, the leaders of the whole country begin to ask for donations and help. When the famine is over, nobody bothers. The same situation continues, there will be no change.

One eminent economist wrote a book called 1975. He has announced in that book that between 1975 and 1980 there will be a great famine in this country, when ten to twenty crores of people may die. He has forecast a great famine in India the like of which has not been recorded in the history of the world. But we will read this and continue to live as before. We shall see when the year 1978 comes. We will pray to God, make big religious sacrifices. God is always on our side! If God is not on our side, at least the sadhus and saints, the agents of God, are on our side. We will again pray to them. We are always praying to them, and they are always misguiding us. They will again go on telling us the same things as they have done thousands of times before, without any results. But we are not ready to think! Whenever calamity comes, the same teachers come and we go on only asking them! We have never thought of applying our own minds to the situation.

Now we will have to think; otherwise, in the near future we will not only be poor and hungry but our soul will also become poor and hungry. It can also happen that compared to those who have gone before, our soul and consciousness can fall backwards. If we continue to live like this it is very possible that there will be no difference between us and the primitives living in the jungle. During the next fifty years we may reach the condition where the present difference between us and the primitives will be the difference between America, Russia, Europe and ourselves.

Even now the whole world is afraid of us, because they see that the vastness of our begging country is so much that it is very difficult to satisfy the needs. Now they are also not ready to do anything. Twenty years ago they had thought that if they helped us, everything would be alright. But with their help we only continued to increase our population. We are aggravating our problems. Now for them the situation will become very unhappy, if the poor Eastern countries, especially countries like India, go on increasing their population, and if they go on living without adequate food and clothing -- because it is difficult to tolerate such great misery and poverty in one part of the earth, when the other part is rolling in riches.

... But what are we doing?

If we look at the problems of our life all around, if we take a newspaper and read, I do not think we are even thinking about any of the big problems of our country. What are we thinking? We are arguing about the water of the river Narmada: does it belong to Madhya Pradesh or Gujarat? It is very difficult to find as foolish people as us. Our newspapers are full of controversies regarding a district remaining in Mysore or Maharashtra! Bullets will rain on innocent people! Our problems are not problems but diseases. We are not trying to solve the problems of life that are facing us. When these problems catch hold of us, we cry and weep; then there is only one remedy and that is to pray to God! When we could do something, when we had time to solve the problems, we wasted our time in controversies, and when we become helpless later we have no alternative except to pray to God.

Remember that even God does not listen to those who only pray. He listens to those who work so hard that even God feels that something should be done. If there is a God anywhere, he helps those who help themselves.

Swami Rama had gone to Japan. There was an old German aged ninety traveling on the same boat. At that age he was learning the Chinese language. It is difficult to learn Chinese; perhaps there is no other language on earth as difficult as Chinese. The reason for this is that the Chinese language has no alphabet; it is a pictorial language, there is a picture for every word. If you desire to express a quarrel or a fight there is no word for it, but there is a picture showing two women sitting under one roof which means quarrel. Thus at least a lakh of words will have to be learnt just to have an ordinary acquaintance with the Chinese language. That man aged ninety trying to learn Chinese! - is he mad? Ramatirtha was wondering what could have happened to that old man. When he was studying since sunrise, he was not aware when sunset happened; when it was dark and when his old eyes were tired, he would return to his cabin.

After about three days Ramatirtha asked him if he ever heard that it takes about ten years to learn the Chinese language. He asked him what was his age. The old man replied, "God may be keeping count of my age; I have no time to waste knowing such futile things."

Ramatirtha said, "It is okay, but it will take ten years to learn and the possibility of your surviving ten years is small."

The old man said, "My experience of ninety years tells me that I have survived ninety years though I could have died any day; I have deceived death for ninety years. Because I have not died so far, I can live still more. But may I ask what is your age?"

Ramatirtha was very much embarrassed, because he was only thirty. He told him he was thirty years old. Then the old man said, "My son, I would like to tell you why your country has become old. You are not doing anything in your country except awaiting death. You are bound to become old."

I feel that if there is a God somewhere, he will be merciful to this old man who is so persevering. If there is no God we don't think of him; but if there is a God, he must be considering giving him a longer life. I heard later that he had lived fifteen more years. Not only did he learn the Chinese language and not only did he read Chinese books, he

left behind a book written by him in the Chinese language! Ramatirtha died after only two years, but that old man lived a life of a hundred and five years. I believe that his liveliness played a valuable role in making him live longer. God should help him live longer -- if there is a God somewhere -- because he was struggling so much for life.

Elsewhere in the world people have converted deserts into green farms, and in India our farms are slowly getting converted into deserts. In many places God made everything grow where nothing ever grew before. Where there was no rainfall he let rivers flow abundantly; he made many things happen where nothing had ever happened. Where there were sand dunes yesterday, where man had never entered, he created beautiful townships. Therefore, if God is there somewhere, he must be listening to the prayers of the working people.

Our idle prayers are not listened to -- to this day, nowhere are such prayers listened to, but still we go on making idle prayers. No, such idlers are never heard and can never be heard. But we are not willing to think, we have given up thinking. Our children also do not think. We just go on walking like a crowd of blind people. Is this right?

I am asking this question everywhere in this country, whether this is right and proper that we go on walking like blind people. Should we make some decisions or not regarding our life? Should we strive or not to make our life better?

But no, we have reached such conclusions that the question of making our life better does not arise. We have invented such explanations for our present condition of life which tell us that there is no need to think, there is no need to work, and there is no need to change anything. If somebody is poor, we say he is poor due to his fate; if somebody is rich, we say he is rich due to his fate. Then we should conclude that all unlucky people are born in India, and God is very pleased with America, and he allows all lucky people to take birth there. If somebody is poor, we say he must have done some wrong deeds in past lives; if somebody is rich, we say he must have done good deeds in his past lives. Does it mean that God considers this country to be hell, and goes on sending all sinful people here? It should mean therefore that all sinful people are born in India and all virtuous people are born somewhere else. Does it look right that all sinful people should be born here?

No. Such conclusions are wrong. We have to think about eradicating poverty. We have not yet done so. We have invented only one explanation: that a person remains poor due to his past deeds. Now there is no need to think, the matter is over. Now you try to improve your next life. You cannot do anything in this life about your past life, because of which you are now suffering. Thus past is past; about the future, what can we do now? Therefore today we have not to do anything, not to think anything. In this way we have saved ourselves from doing anything today!

We will have to give up such suicidal thinking. I do not say that what I am telling you is right; I am only saying this, that whatsoever anybody may say, nothing is going to be right just by anybody saying it. All of us will have to be ready to discuss and deliberate together. Every question will have to be raised again and again. All these questions should be put before the whole country. We should not let future generations be brought up in the same belief system. We have believed in everything for a long time; we have now to activate the process of thinking.

Our method of teaching in schools and colleges is such that when the students come back after their education, they do not have the capacity to think. When they come out after learning science, the structure of their mind continues to remain old. They catch hold of science like blind people; they are not aware of the fact that to catch hold of science like blind people is dangerous, because science is changing daily. When we come out of universities, or while we are still studying in universities, science continues to change. It is no use catching hold of science like blind people. One has to go on thinking and contemplating so that one can do something directly to solve the problems of life.

If in such a big country as ours the process of thinking becomes free, perhaps we shall be capable of changing our life in all directions. There is no necessity for us to remain poor. It is our ignorance that keeps us poor. Now we do not have to suffer from so many diseases; it is only our ignorance that has kept us sick. There is no necessity to make this earth such a hell. Science has opened up such great possibilities that if we think properly we can make this earth a heaven, with the help of new knowledge.

But this is not happening, because our minds are old and the structure is absolutely closed. All minds are closed, just as if a person closes all the doors and windows of his house and sits hiding within. He opens neither a door nor a window; neither sun rays enter nor fresh air comes. He is decaying inside and dying. We are closed in the same way.

No. Our mind must be open in all directions. We should be able to doubt the Gita, we should be able to doubt Ramayana; then our mind will be open and free. Then we will begin to think. But we say Mahavira was omniscient; whatsoever he has known is true for all time. Whatsoever is written in the scriptures about the moon is right - even the Shankaracharya says such things! He says that in the first place actually nobody has stepped on the moon, it is all false rumors; secondly, even if they have reached the moon, it is not the same moon referred to in our scriptures. That moon is far far away. Just see to what extent we have closed our minds!

One old woman came and asked me, "Have you heard what the Shankaracharya has said?"

I said, "I have heard, and if our country is sane enough, mental treatment of such people will have to be done. "

That old woman said, "What are you saying? He is our world teacher. Whatsoever he says should be right."

I said, "It appears right to you. It will continue to appear right to you, because your mind is as closed as his."

But this will not do any more. If not today, then tomorrow they will be proved mad, along with the whole groups of their followers. But we go on and on unchanged!

Very recently I was in Patna, where I was sitting with the Shankaracharya on the same podium. The Shakaracharya said that it is not necessary to educate women. Why? - because Hinduism has given so much respect to women that there is no necessity to educate them! He said one more interesting thing, and everybody continued to listen to him without protest. He also said that in the West, if a woman wants to be a doctor she has to study medicine; our Hindu religion is so great that if a woman gets married to a doctor, everyone calls her 'doctorani'! There is not so much necessity to learn. And the women who were sitting in front of the dais clapped and praised the Shankaracharya. They were very pleased to know how easy it is to become a doctorani in India. It is not necessary to learn medicine, it is enough to become a doctor's wife! If we are thinking this way, are we thinking or not thinking at all?

We are listening to such things and continue to listen to such things! We are doing such things that the whole world laughs at us. The whole world wonders what has happened to this country. Perhaps because the whole country has ceased to think for a long time, its mind has got rusted. It happens. If you stop walking for a long time or if you bind your feet for two years, your legs will not be able to walk. In this the legs are not at fault. If for two years a man remains in darkness and closes his eyes, his eyes will not be able to see light; seeing light, the eyes will close. The eyes will lose their capacity to see. The light will become frightening. If a race or a society or a man ceases to think for thousands of years, the ability to think is also lost.

Whatsoever we do continues to be carried on; whatsoever we do, the edge sharpens. In whatsoever we continue to do we become more proficient and the skill gets developed. Whatsoever we do not do remains undeveloped. We have ceased to think, so our thinking has got rusted; therefore we are not able to think about anything. We are standing in the stream of life helpless, powerless, and getting pushed and pulled. If slavery comes we become slaves, if independence comes we will become independent. The independence is also taken for granted, like the slavery. Nothing happens within us. If tomorrow slavery comes we will again become slaves. We are not worried. If we fall sick we accept it; if we become poor it is okay; if there is famine and we die it is okay; if there are floods it is okay. Whatsoever comes we accept.

Are we human beings, or have we become like machines that whatsoever happens we allow it to happen and go on just looking at it? Have we got no challenges in life, have we no intention of changing our lives? Have we lost our soul within? We are talking about soul continuously -- it seems soul is something available readymade in the market that we can just go and buy. Or did we just read the scriptures and get the soul? Or repeating "Rama Naama," did we get the soul? The soul is available only to those who continue to fight against the whole ugliness of life, all the miseries, ignorance and darkness of life. Soul is the fruit of struggle and strife.

Those who lose truth have only stories to tell. If you meet a poor man he will only be talking about money; if you meet a sick person he will be talking about health. Nobody talks about health except those who are sick. A healthy man just lives; when does he have time even to talk? Does a sick person ever sit quietly and talk about health? He reads a book on naturopathy to know what health is, how to become healthy, what is the definition of health. Once health is lost it takes time to again understand the meaning of health. A healthy person lives health -- has he time to read about health? When one loses his soul he goes on talking about soul everywhere. When God is lost there begins talk about God. One talks about whatsoever is lost.

But since we go on talking a lot about the soul there is a feeling that we are knowers of the soul. No, we are not knowers of the soul at all; we have not done anything towards knowing the soul. We have neither thought about it nor have we struggled for it. When we have not accepted any challenge for it, how will the soul be born? We have never called out for it. We just go on talking about the soul.

I will tell you an event and finish my talk.

A friend of mine sent me a pamphlet from America. In that pamphlet there was an amusing article. In that article jokes about many races of the world were told. It was written that if you make an Englishman drunk he will become silent; you cannot make him speak a word. Actually in reality an Englishman is always silent. If you happen to travel with an Englishman in a train he will not even recognize your presence; even if you are together for twenty-four hours he will remain silent. He is like a man closed into himself: he will not talk to you. But when you make him drunk this quality of keeping quiet will be enhanced and he will not talk at all. If a Frenchman is made drunk he will begin to sing and dance, as is the case in life: he goes on singing and dancing. If a Danish man is made drunk he will become voracious by attacking food. As he is, when a Danish man sits for taking meals, it is not easy to move him away from the dining table.

In the same way jokes about all races were written in that article, but there was no mention of Indians. My friend therefore asked me, "What will happen if an Indian is made drunk?"

I replied that the answer is well known: if an Indian is made drunk he will begin to preach about the soul and God. Actually, due to his poverty an Indian cannot easily get liquor, so he has to talk about the soul and god even

without liquor. We Indians are a talkative community; we have stopped living and doing because we have ceased to think.

Thinking is the most distinctive quality of man, the most foundational quality. Thinking is supportive of the very life of man. Only because of his ability to think is man different from animals. If man ceases to think he will become like an animal. The condition in India is very much like that. If you go to a small village you will find the people sleeping just where a cow is standing, where a buffalo or a bullock is tied to a pole. The man is just sleeping with them. If you look deeply you will see a great similarity between man and animal. They are staying together, and go on living together quietly. And people calling the cow "mother" certainly are not expected to be different from the offspring of a cow!

By giving up thinking we have given up the path of endeavor for humanity as a whole. We are just standing like animals. No development is happening, no progress -- nowhere to go, we are standing silently, static and dead. This should not continue for long. It is not right to continue like that anymore. Let us change this. To break this habit a crowd is not necessary. Once every person begins to think for himself, all around thousands of things will begin to happen. When you begin to think, you will throw away an amulet that was tied on you foolishly. If you begin to think, you will ask if quarrels about a temple and a mosque can ever arise among good human beings? You will ask only if you think -- hundreds of questions will arise if you think. And when questions arise, answers will have to be found. If you do not get answers you will have to be ready to give up that which is wrong. If you get answers, what is right will be in your hands.

Thinking is arduous, a difficult process. Thinking is not very convenient. Not to think is very convenient. If somebody is thinking for us, we just believe in him; we have nothing more to do. We are in the habit of having all our work -- our thinking -- done by others... and we are using the work of those who lived long long ago. Ages have passed since Krishna. That poor Krishna may have done the thinking; we just carry on with what he had thought! We read the Gita; our great saints are looking into the Gita for answers. When some question arises in life we open the Gita and look into it. Has Krishna completed all thinking for us? And our work is only to continue to live on that borrowed thinking? If we do not begin to think we will not be able to create the Krishna within us. By listening to the Gita, Krishna will not be born. Only those who are able to think as quickly and clearly as Krishna will be able to give birth to Krishna-consciousness.

I am telling you this in the hope that perhaps this hammering may activate the process of thinking within you. I do not want you to believe in what I say. Those who want you to believe in them are not strengthening your thinking process, but are cutting the roots of all thinking. Do not believe any such talk. We have been believing in the talks of such people since lifetimes. Search within yourselves now. Make a firm decision in life: If I have no thought of my own, my life is uselessly spent. Before death at least I should have some thinking about myself, so that when I am brought before God I should be able to say that I had thought like this or that; I had lived according to my thinking; that my life was not just a borrowed life. Otherwise, if we come before God as we are now, there will be nothing else but the talk borrowed all along.

God may ask you, "What is your own? Have you yourself thought of anything? Have you lived your life? How much consciousness have you developed ?"

We would then have to reply, "No, we were only reading the Gita and the Ramayana, and we were believing in priests and were following the mahatmas. Where is the necessity for us to think? There are many mahatmas in our country; they are doing our work."

God will say that he had questioned those mahatmas also; they had replied that they were following some earlier mahatmas!

You have always been following someone. Why have you never thought for yourself? Those who do not think for themselves can never be themselves; they do not develop their being. Such persons cannot become individuals. One who has escaped being an individual, can he ever be religious? How will he know the truth? How can he gain admittance into the temple of God? The first condition for getting admitted into God's temple is to be an individual. You will have to take something of your own to offer. God will ask you to surrender: you must have something of your own to surrender.

What have we got to surrender? Ask this question to yourselves. Search within and think, and perhaps you may find the answer. In this country, if only a few people begin to think the state of being old and archaic may drop, a new soul may take birth. The inertia will go away and consciousness may begin to develop. If that happens, perhaps we shall be able to stand on this earth on our own legs. Others have already set their feet on the moon and have come back, whereas our feet are shaky even on this earth, afraid of falling down. Others have already stood firmly on the moon -- but what about us? We are not even able to stand on this earth! This does not become us. But we are clever: we do not see our condition, but go on repeating our old talk about being the world teachers. We claim that we are the leaders of the world, that the whole world is looking at us for guidance! Nobody is looking towards anybody; everybody is looking towards himself. Do not be in any such delusion that the whole world is looking towards you. Nobody has time to either look at you, nor is there any such necessity. Nobody is waiting for you to get knowledge.

Our present condition shows that we are under deep layers of ignorance. Who is going to come to you for knowledge? Is there any evidence about your ability to guide? Can those who are begging for their daily bread, ever give anything? Let us not deceive ourselves. Let us not lie to ourselves. Let us understand our condition and think.

I am addressing this to the new generation, to the young children, to the youth and the students. Do not just believe in the talks of your parents and teachers, but think for yourself. If you think they are right, you may agree; otherwise, fight. Do not just believe.

In the Sorbonne University in France, the students have written a few words on the front of a building. Efforts have been made to remove that writing. The students however have refused to remove that unique writing. It is written there: "Professors, you have become old." The writing is very prominent and many efforts were made to remove it. The professors quarreled with the students, but the students said, "Every professor should pass by and read that he has become old, and he should kindly bear in mind that he should not make any attempt to make the students old."

Therefore, think a little....

I am grateful to you for having heard me peacefully, with so much love. Finally, I bow down to the God residing within all of you. Accept my greetings.

Revolution in Education

Chapter #9

Chapter title: Transformation Through Awareness

2 September 1969 pm

The original title was: Education: Means and Ends

Question 1

DO YOU THINK IT IS NECESSARY TO GIVE A NEW TYPE OF EDUCATION SO THAT PEOPLE MAY UNDERSTAND DIFFERENTIATIONS? CAN OBJECTIVITY AND SUBJECTIVITY BE SEPARATED? DO YOU THINK IT IS POSSIBLE TO GIVE SUCH RIGHT EDUCATION?

Yes, it is necessary to have such a civilization which does not teach distinctions from the very childhood and which may lead to the understanding of oneness. The reality is that from the beginning there are no distinctions in the mind of a child. Distinctions are taught by us. It is true to such an extent that a child is not able to distinguish between a dream and reality.

A child weeps in the morning after seeing a dream at night. He is weeping for a toy which he saw in a dream; he is asking for that toy. The child is not able to distinguish between what he sees in a dream and what he sees when he is awake. His seeing is without any distinction. A person addresses his father as ''father,'' but a child who hears this will also address that person as ''father.'' For the child it is difficult to understand that that person was not his father. He does not know whether he is a Hindu or a Mohammedan; he does not know anything. He is still in the world of oneness, but that oneness is full of ignorance.

A saint ultimately enters into the same world of oneness, but then his oneness is full of knowing. Whosoever is ignorant can be divided; we cannot divide the oneness of the saint, because his oneness is born out of his knowing. Children are born out of oneness, but they are taught distinctions; it is necessary to teach them some distinctions; it is useful for living. It is necessary to teach what is poison and what is nectar, it is necessary to know where there is a door and where there is a wall. It is also necessary to teach where is harm and where there is safety -- these distinctions have to be taught.

But it is necessary to see that behind all this teaching of distinctions there should develop continuously a sense of oneness in his mind -- meaning he should remain aware of the fact that sometimes poison acts like nectar and sometimes what is taken to be nectar acts like poison. He should be able to understand that there are times when a man recovers when poison is administered and there are times when nectar taken in excess may kill the person. When a child grows up some distinctions will have to be taught, but the child's awareness should also develop to understand that all the distinctions are just functional, that the distinctions are made looking to the limitations of man. Within him a current of oneness should continuously flow. He should be aware of the fact that all things are united from within.

The impact of our life on the child should be such that he visualizes life in its oneness. He should not feel that inner and outer, subjective and objective are two things -- he should feel life as a whole. He should understand that he is the same person when he is eating and when he is praying; that his prayer is connected in some deep way with

his eating, it cannot be separate. The child should become aware of this inner principle, and it is not difficult for a child, who in reality feels that he is the same person, to become aware who eats and who prays. But he becomes confused when he sees that his father becomes a different person when he eats, a different person when he is sitting in his shop, and a third person when he is praying. When he comes home he becomes a different person, and when he is facing a servant he becomes yet another person. The child is not able to understand this.

A child is being told that he should respect his father because he is old. The child then wants to respect the old servant also, because if old age is a matter for respect, then the old servant should also get respect. Such behavior on the child's part is beyond our understanding. We then tell the child to respect his old father, not the old servant. Then we are creating a distinction.

But this distinction is not just limited to one between a father and a servant; it creates two faces within him: one to be shown to the father and the other to be shown to the servant. The child learns that he has to stand in a temple one way and sit in the shop in a different way. One has to be clever in the shop and simple in the temple. This way we are teaching him divisions. Slowly all these distinctive impressions, layer after layer, will get built in and the child will take these distinctions as conclusive in his life.

Actually the system of education should be such that from the very childhood, right from the parents and school to the university, he remains aware of the fact that every thing is connected; he should remain aware that something is connecting even two opposites from within. One thing should be very clear in his mind: that he is undivided and whole; that there can be no two things like inner and outer; that "whosoever I am from outside, I am the same from within." Then only will there be born in him an integrated individual, an individuality which is not divisible.

Our society has a system that builds up personality but does not create any individuality. Society creates a personality, but does not make an individual. Personality does not mean one whole individual but an individual divided into many parts -- he has many masks from outside, a separate mask meant for each different individual. He can change the mask according to the need. There is not one individual within him who remains the same in all states, conditions and situations, the same inside and outside, the same in a temple and in a shop.

We are doing the same thing always: we consider aims, goals and ends as of primary importance. This has put man into many difficulties. The first thing that is to be understood is that the goal is somewhere in the future and we are in the present. Wherever we are we will be in the present and our goals will always be in the future. The goal can never be in the present, we can never be in the future; whenever we are, we are in the present, we can never be in the future. Therefore we are creating such a tension in our mind which cannot be resolved. We are creating such a mad anxiety in a person which cannot be removed. His goal is always in the future and he is in the today. There can be no meeting between today and tomorrow, because when tomorrow comes it will become today and the goal will shift to the tomorrow. In such a situation the person will live unchanged throughout his life and his idea of the goal will continue to torture him and harass him.

If a man is violent he will remain violent, but the goal will be nonviolence. He will say that sometime he will become nonviolent: if not in this life, in the next he will become nonviolent. But he will continue to remain violent because he has to live today and nonviolence can happen tomorrow; thus the nonviolence that is going to happen tomorrow will remain to be achieved tomorrow. He will go on postponing.

Thus there is one beauty in a goal: that whatsoever is important in the life of man, he will look for a trick to postpone it. He will say, "It is not possible to be nonviolent today; I am violent now Slowly therefore I shall endeavor, meditate, pray, do yoga, take sannyas. If not in this life, in the next life, or in still another life -- sometime I will become nonviolent. It is not a small thing, that it can happen just today!"

A convenient excuse therefore is found to postpone till tomorrow. Now that the goal has been postponed till tomorrow, I shall remain the same as I am today. What can I do? It is not my fault, the goal is not achievable today. Therefore I shall remain as violent as I am. This means that a man who is violent will remain violent; nonviolence will be the goal and he will engrave in his temple the words: "Nonviolence is the supreme religion. This is the only religion which is to be achieved."

Our old Tirthankaras have achieved this in the past; we have now to achieve the same. It is written in the story about Mahavira, that he achieved nonviolence by toiling for it birth after birth for many births. Therefore that nonviolence is the future goal -- "but now I am violent." What I want to emphasize is that this goal-oriented outlook allows you to postpone things, and that is very dangerous.

Another thing that happens as a result of a goal-oriented outlook is that it creates suppression in the mind of a person and creates a sort of torture due to one's remaining violent. He wants to be nonviolent -- what can he do? Should he suppress violence, should he pretend being nonviolent -- what can be the way out? Since I am violent, even after my pretending nonviolence, my violence is going to continue. It is therefore very interesting to note that in becoming nonviolent I shall use violence. If I have to be nonviolent I will run away from my wife; it does not matter if due to my action my wife dies of starvation and the children begin to beg in the streets -- in the process I am

becoming nonviolent. The irony of the situation is that this violent behavior of mine is only with the goal of becoming nonviolent, and therefore it matters little....

There was one famous Jaina sadhu. After leaving his wife in his town, he stayed for twenty years in Varanasi. He received news about his wife's death through a telegram. On reading the telegram he exclaimed, "Good, the botheration is over!" In his biography it is written that he was such a great ascetic that even on the death of his wife he did not express any unhappiness He only said, "Good, the botheration is over!"

Somebody had come to give me his biography. I told that man, "It is a matter of great astonishment to me that when he had given up his wife twenty years ago, where was the question of any botheration? There must have been no botheration whatsoever: he had left her twenty years before. What botheration can be there from a wife that was abandoned? On her death, if that ascetic thought that his wife was a botheration, that must be due to his awaiting her death all these twenty years. This man is violent, which means he could even have killed her. In fact, it was an attempt to kill her when he ran away leaving her dying -- and now after twenty years he talks about "botheration." That man was of a very violent nature, because even at her moment of death he had no feeling of compassion, pain, or sensation of unhappiness. What he said was full of violence, and during these twenty years he had been practising nothing but violence.

What else can a poor violent person do in trying to be nonviolent? He can only make use of violence. He will be violent towards others and towards himself also. It becomes problematic when we become violent to others: we know and others also know that we are violent, but when we become violent to ourselves we do not understand that we are violent. If a man goes on a long fast we do not think he is doing any violence. But when I catch hold of a person, lock him up in a room, do not give him any food, and keep him starving for a number of days, the whole town will come to know that I am a very violent person, starving a locked-up man for such a long time. But if I lock myself in a room and do not take any food for twenty days I will be considered a great ascetic person. In both the situations I am doing the same thing. The only difference is that in one case I am being violent to another person and in the other case I am being violent to myself. The illusion arises because the doer in one case, and the person on whom something is done in the other case, are not two different persons.

Another thing I would like to tell you is that whatsoever a violent person may do to become nonviolent, can only be violent. He cannot become nonviolent that way. Therefore I say that the question is not of nonviolence being a supreme religion, but of who you are and what you are doing. Let this be understood properly. If I am doing violence, let it go deep within me that I am violent, and let that violent nature of mine become clearer and go deeper in my awareness, and let me realise that I am violent from morning till evening; let me realise that when I am walking on the road there is violence in my walk also. Violence is not such that it happens only when one puts a knife into somebody's chest.

It is thought by people of very poor intelligence that only when you put a knife into another person's chest does it become violence. The violence of staring at a person in a particular way can become more violent than putting a knife in his chest. Violence can happen even if you do not look at somebody at all. It is not only a question of seeing violently: if you are passing on a road and if I pass by without looking at you, as if you are just a small fry, as if you are a nonentity.... Big leaders walk that way on the road. They are walking as if people walking around them are just worms.

Question 2

DO YOU THINK THAT OUR NEW EDUCATION AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS WILL EVER BE ABLE TO SOLVE THIS PROBLEM?

First, try to understand what I am telling you. It is more valuable that you become fully aware of the fact that you are violent. It is not a question of achieving nonviolence: one has to realise what one is now, today, this moment. If I can rightly see that I am violent for all the twenty-four hours.... It is not that you become sometimes violent and sometimes nonviolent; there is a continuity in your being. Whatsoever you are, you remain the same for almost twenty-four hours -- sometimes appearing a little less violent, sometimes appearing a little more violent; sometimes manifestly violent, sometimes violent in disguise. Nevertheless you do remain what you are. A violent person will remain violent in all his doing. Even when he is praying, if you can look within his heart, he will be found to be violent. Even when he is giving charity, if you can look within his mind, he will be doing violence. While giving charity somebody's poverty is not a matter of importance for him, but when he is giving charity it is he who is giving, who is important, not the one who is receiving it. While giving charity also his ego is getting nourished. Whatsoever that violent person does will be violent.

Therefore what I want to tell you is that it is not necessary to make nonviolence a goal. It was an old trick, but it has failed. It has caused great harm. What is necessary is to know what I am, know it and recognize it. What am I today? What am I now? If my recognition of this becomes quite clear, I do not have to do anything else. The more clearly I see that violence is existing every moment in me, the deeper will be my understanding.

The moment I see violence as violence, violence will become impossible. Violence will disappear. My sitting, standing, eating, drinking, walking, speaking, meeting -- everything, all my gestures will change. I will not have to change it; I will not change anything, keeping nonviolence as a goal before me. I should just recognize that violence exists in me, and the transformation will happen. It is understanding that changes. Just as the changes happen, I will know that violence is disappearing. When violence disappears, what remains is nonviolence. It means that nonviolence is not a goal which is to be reached tomorrow. If today violence disappears from my mind, then today nonviolence is achieved -- this very moment.

Nonviolence is neither to be brought from anywhere, nor to be reached. Nonviolence is not a matter of any gap in time, that I will reach within ten years or after trying for ten births; it is not a goal. If my violence disappears today I am nonviolent today. How can this violence disappear? It cannot disappear through any violent means. If one thinks that by going on a fast he can become nonviolent.... Fasting itself is a violent means, a torture, suicidal. By fasting, neither violence can disappear, nor can nonviolence happen. A person may say, "I shall stand on my head or remain lying on a bed of thorns" -- all these are violent means. Through them one cannot become nonviolent. Then the question arises: What can be the means for achieving nonviolence?

The first thing: Understanding is the first means. There is no other nonviolent method in this world as good as understanding -- because for one whose understanding increases, violence becomes impossible. Understanding is so nonviolent that violence is impossible. Once you are able to see that this is violence, it disappears. The moment of your seeing becomes the moment of its disappearing. Nothing more has to be done.

Now the question you have raised about the present education system -- whether it will be able to do something.

The present education system cannot do anything, because the whole system of education today is devised keeping goals in mind. We are teaching goals to children. We are teaching children not to steal -- non-stealing is the goal. That goal is somewhere in the future: today the children steal. Today the teacher is stealing, the father is stealing, the mother is also stealing, the town is stealing, the whole world is stealing. And everybody is teaching non-stealing, to give up stealing. The child also takes a vow to give up stealing, but the moment this vow is being taken, at that very moment the stealing is accepted; stealing will continue -- because the child says, he will give up stealing. What is promised for tomorrow becomes a lie; nothing is to be done today. Today stealing is to be done, has to be done -- but it will have to be given up, that is the goal of man. Talking about the goals in the life of man is a highly dishonest thing.

Now we need a new system of education wherein a child is not just told not to tell any lies, but he should be told to just remain aware when he is telling a lie. There is no necessity to be afraid or to run away, but only to know that you are telling a lie. The fact that the child has become aware, due to your assistance, of the act of lying, is enough. We do not have to tell them anything more. We do not have to tell them not to tell a lie or to give up lying; that question does not arise. A child's sensitivity should increase so much that it knows instantly that it has told a lie. It should not happen that the child tells a lie but does not know that it has told a lie. But such things are happening in our life! Man is not able to understand things.

You meet a man passing on the road and you just ask him, "How are you?"... and then you inquire if he had seen a particular person. He says he saw him only yesterday. That particular man was not there in the town at all. That man who had replied had nothing to do with the person about whom the inquiry was made. He was not aware that he was telling a lie. He had no interest in telling a lie. But he was perhaps not aware about what he was speaking or why he was speaking. But there must be some reason why he was speaking. Neither was he aware of those reasons nor had he any idea of them.

I had a professor. Whenever I talked about any book, he would immediately say, "Oh! It is very good, I have read about that book!" After a few days I began to doubt, because if he had read that book he never mentioned it in the class. It seemed there was not a single book which he had not read.

One day when I met him, I gave him a false name of a nonexistent writer. I told him there was a Russian philosopher named Bornokov.... He said, "Oh yes! His book is very good. I have read his book -- but I have read it about twenty years ago!"

I then immediately told him that there was no such author born twenty years ago or even twenty crores of years ago. When there was no such author, there could be no question of his writing a book. "I asked the question only because I felt that you had not read a certain book, but you were simply saying that you had read it. It was painful for you to accept that there could be any book which you might not have read!"

Such is the ego, creating problems. But he was not aware. He was so much accustomed to speak that way that it would be wrong to say that he was knowingly telling a lie. This had become his nature, a part of his blood -- lies come out of it.

Therefore there is no question of teaching someone not to tell lies. The question is of awakening him so that whenever he tells a lie he would know that he has told a lie. I believe that it is slowly becoming impossible to tell lies knowingly -- because slowly one realises the absurdity, the foolishness, the ignorance and the folly of telling lies and

slowly one sees the harm that is caused. One also realises that one lie leads to another and another. We get so much entangled that it becomes difficult to get out.

Another interesting fact is that in telling lies we are not only harming others, but we are harming ourselves much more, because slowly we become incapable of knowing the truth itself. From a humane angle, I feel, such a person becomes so much weakened that we cannot imagine. A person who tells lies does not believe that any one can ever speak the truth. He is not able to trust anyone, he cannot make anyone his friend. He cannot ever take any matter in its natural way. His potential of being a man will remain weak. If we can understand where this habit of telling lies may lead us to, and what is happening within us or what fruits we may reap or what we are doing to others, then we will not tell lies anytime.

Another interesting thing is that though we are teaching others not to tell lies, we never teach why anyone ever tells a lie. On the one hand the educationist teaches not to tell lies, but on the other hand he also goes on teaching those very things due to which one is tempted to tell a lie. For example, the fundamental reason for telling a lie is fear. If we desire that there should be no falsehoods we must destroy the fear. But the teacher has a cane in his hands and threatens that if any one tells a lie he will break his head. Now this teacher also does not know what he is doing. On the one hand he is instilling fear in the mind of the child, and on the other hand he says that if the child tells a lie he will break his head. That fear will compel the child to tell a lie. If the child was playing some game with other children and came late to the school, the child would say he had gone to bring medicine for his father. He is telling this because of the fear of the cane. The teacher teaches that if the child tells a lie he will be punished. The teacher does not understand that while telling a lie is wrong, threatening with the cane is also wrong.

If the teacher wants that his students should not tell lies, then fear must be removed from the field of education. Let the children become fearless. Make them so full of courage that they will be ready to face any calamity laughingly, but will not tolerate the embarrassment of telling a lie.

I have read one novel. It is a wonderful story. There is one character in it who kills an absolute stranger with a knife all of a sudden. Two people were taking a sunbath on the beach, when suddenly one got up and thrust a knife in the other's back. He had not even seen the face of that stranger, because the stranger was lying on his belly. When he was brought before the court he explained that he was feeling that in his whole life he had done nothing; his whole life so far had passed off uselessly, without any events. His name never appeared in the newspapers. So while he was taking a sunbath he felt that if he thrusts a knife in that back shining under the sun, his name will be printed in the newspapers and there would be a lot of talk about him. He said, "I have therefore done something. I am also feeling the thrill. I have stabbed him for the thrill of it, there is no other reason."

Nobody believed the story. The court also could not believe it, because nobody in this world had done anything like it before. The court therefore threatened that he would be given capital punishment.

That man replied, "The story is only this, there is nothing more; the court may do what it thinks fit." Now for this some witnesses had to be found, because as it was nobody was prepared to believe in the story of killing somebody without any reason.

One witness reported that when his mother had died he was found in a theater the same night. In the morning his mother died and the same night he was seeing a show in a theater. The court asked him if he was seeing a show in a theater the same night his mother had died, and he replied, "Yes, I was seeing the show, because I thought that my mother had already died, and now whenever I would go to a theater it would be only after my mother's death; there was no other alternative. Now, how can I go to a theater before her death? I can now only go after her death. My going to a theater is going to happen only after this event of her death. Whether it happens after one day or two days or three days, what difference will it make? If people can go to a theater only before their mother's death, all theaters will have to be closed down. Whose mother does not die? Everybody's mother dies someday."

The court felt that the person was very dangerous: he can see a show in a theater on the very night of the day his mother died! He had explained that he had taken the ticket earlier, prior to her death. Even then the court felt that, "How can it be possible to see a show on that night?" That man continued to argue that hereafter, whenever he would see a show, it would be only after her death. That man did not deny seeing the show.

Another person had asked him, "You must have been very sad when your mother died?" That man gave evidence in the court; he replied, "Yes, I was very sad. The previous night I had to sit near her death bed and I was not able to sleep the whole night."

The court was also told that that man was very dangerous because he was telling the truth. He had also said, "At first I was very unhappy, at her death, but afterwards I became more unhappy, because I had not been able to sleep the whole night. My mother had already died. Whatever sadness I had to experience, I did experience. Now why should I spoil another night?"

For the court, this was not at all believable. The magistrate in the court expected that at least he should not have spoken all that he did so truthfully. He was talking like an idiot. He was telling so much truth that nobody in this world would believe it -- because the whole world is just existing on falsehood.

Tears came into the eyes of the magistrate. He said, "I have not seen a person like this before. He goes on telling that at first he was sad due to his mother's death, but a few hours later he felt that he need not spoil the night after her death. Now, what he was telling was the truth. What can I do in this matter?"

Actually, on the one hand we are teaching not to tell lies and on the other hand we are instilling fear in man about the consequences of telling lies. If we want to lead a man towards truth and if we desire to show him how joyful it is to tell the truth, we will have to create new values. We will have to teach fearlessness and we will have to accept the truth straight, as it is. Truth is very cruel; though the world asks everybody to speak the truth, the world is not ready for truth, because truth is very cruel, harsh and merciless.

When some person comes to your house, at first you feel a little upset, but you welcome him saying, "It is very fortunate for us that you came." That man also knows that there was nothing to feel fortunate about in his coming. When you go to his house he also welcomes you the same way, knowing full well the embarrassment he is experiencing.

We have created a false world around us. In this world, speaking truth is our goal and the whole structure is built on falsehood. We will not accept the truth. Can a man tell his wife while walking on a road, "That woman passing by is very beautiful and I like her very much"? Actually, while walking on the road, a woman can and will look beautiful -- but can he say this to his wife? ... And our whole social structure is advising us to speak the truth.

It will be a beautiful world in which we are able to make our children accept the truth. We should be able to convince our daughters that it is not necessary that only she should be liked; when she becomes a wife it is possible that the husband may like someone else. It would be a wonderful day, and a very loving one at that, when the husband would be able to say that some other woman is looking very beautiful.... And if the wife would be able to hear this and remain compassionate in this situation, then only she is a wife; then only there is love between them. Tomorrow the wife can also say....

One such event happened. Four years ago a woman came to me in Bombay. She told me that she was in great difficulty. The difficulty was that her husband loved her very much, there was no end to his love, but she was not able to love him at all. Her love was still with the man she loved before her marriage -- it was so even today. That man was staying in Africa. She was not able to meet him after the marriage because he came to Bombay for three or four days only every four to six years.

She said, "My husband loves me so much that it is becoming burdensome to me. It would be better if my husband does not love me. I am not able to love him, because that man's face is still very much in my mind till now. Now I do not have anything to do with that man; there is no point, no question about him. Now I am very much sorry for my husband, but what can I do?" And she started weeping bitterly.

I told her to tell the whole thing to her husband. That way she would become very light. She replied, "What will my husband think? He has loved me so much, and now twenty years have passed since our marriage. It is not any recent event -- but my mind is still the same, involved with that man!"

I again tried to explain to her and convinced her that it would be a matter of great love for her to do so. I had also told her that I knew her husband well and that he was coming to me. She was very much afraid. At last she agreed to tell the whole story... and she told him.

After that she met me when I had gone to Bombay again. She said, "Something very astonishing happened. I never expected it. After my telling him the whole story, from that very day his love towards me became wonderful and immense. We were never so close before and I became very light after telling him. Afterwards, when that man came from Africa, my husband called him and made him stay in our house. He was there with us for seven days and during those seven days my husband tried to leave us alone together as much as possible, to sit, to talk and to meet. However, within these seven days that man went right out of my mind, and what had not happened during these twenty years happened within seven days due to my husband's wholehearted effort to let us live near each other.

"My husband began to remain away from the house as much as possible. As a result, that man's image left my mind, because all that I had imagined about that man.... He was a very ordinary man... and I saw in my husband what I never could before, because I never tried -- his great love that had remained steadfast all along. That love is now clear to me."

If we cannot teach the real meaning of telling the truth.... And I am sure the phenomenon that happened in her life could never have happened if she had not told the truth. It could not have happened while that layer of falsehood remained intact. That man left her mind for ever, that matter was finished, and what is more -- the most important and most significant thing that happened -- that wonderful husband came very close to her. That man gone, things became so clear that a wall that had existed between her and her husband was destroyed. There was no feeling of guilt, no wound, no secrets in between them. Everything became light. Only when we hide things do they become a burden.

Therefore I feel that our whole system is based on falsehood in that we do not give any room to truth, but we have made truth our goal. All our arrangements are like that. All arrangements are based on violence, but the goal is

of nonviolence. The whole arrangement is dishonest, but we go on talking about honesty. Ultimately what has happened is that the greater the dishonesty there is in the mind, the greater is the illusion of honesty.

Those words "honesty is religion" written on our doors can enable perpetration of a bigger dishonesty. It means that honesty will be used for committing dishonesty. But we are not aware of this. This has happened due to our setting the goals to be achieved in the future.

I would like a system of education in which the goal is day-to-day living. There is nothing like future: whatsoever I am living today is all and everything. We should create such an atmosphere in the educational institutions which will help us to understand, to recognize and to know, that howsoever harsh the truth may be, we should respect only those who speak the truth. However indifferent and cruel the truth may appear, the truth only must be respected. From the very first day of our education, all the efforts should be directed towards increasing our recognition and knowledge of what truth is. We should know how to expose the falsehood and should know why we should expose the falsehood. Our endeavour should be to increase the respect and dignity of truth. Geography, mathematics, chemistry and physics are not as important as the meditative awareness.

The meditative mind will be helpful in understanding the games of our mind, and, the transformation happens in the same proportion as the depth of our understanding increases. Understanding is the only instrument and there is no other instrument better than that.